TRUE RELIGION DELINEATED;

OR,

Experimental Religion,

AS DISTINGUISHED FROM FORMALITY ON THE ONE HAND, AND ENTHUSIASM ON THE OTHER,

SET IN A SCRIPTURAL AND RATIONAL LIGHT.

In two Discourses:

IN WHICH

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL ERRORS BOTH OF THE ARMINIANS AND ANTINOMIANS ARE CONFUTED....THE FOUNDATION AND SUPERSTRUCTURE OF THEIR DIFFERENT SCHEMES DEMOLISHED....AND THE TRUTH, AS IT IS IN JESUS, EXPLAINED AND PROVED.

The whole adapted to the weakest capacities, and designed for the establishment, comfort, and quickening of the people of GOD.

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WITH A PREFACE BY THE REV. MR. EDWARDS.

ISAIAH XXX. 21....*And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.*

MATTHEW VII. 13, 14....*Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

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PREFACE.

THE being of GOD is reckoned the first, greatest, and most fundamental of all things that are the objects of knowledge or belief; and, next to that, must be reckoned the nature of that religion which God requires of us, and must be found in us, in order to our enjoying the benefits of his favor: Or rather this may be esteemed of like importance with the other; for it in like manner concerns us to know how we may honor and please God, and be accepted of him, as it concerns us to know that he has a being. This is a point of infinite consequence to every single person; each one having to do with God as his supreme judge, who will fix his eternal state, according as he finds him to be *with* or *without* true religion. And this is also a point that vastly concerns the public interests of the Church of God.

It is very apparent that the want of a thorough distinction in this matter, through the defect either of sufficient discernment or care, has been the chief thing that has obscured, obstructed, and brought to a stand all remarkable revivals of religion which have been since the beginning of the reformation; the very chief reason why the most hopeful and promising beginnings have never come to any more than beginnings; being nipt in the bud, and soon followed with a great increase of stupidity, corrupt principles, a profane and atheistical spirit, and the triumph of the open enemies of religion. And from hence, and from what has been so evident, from time to time, in these latter ages of the church, and from the small acquaintance I have with the history of preceding times, I cannot but think, that if the events, which have appeared from age to age, should be

carefully examined and considered, it would appear that it has been thus in all ages of the Christian Church from the beginning.

They, therefore, who bring any addition of light to this great subject, *The nature of true religion, and its distinction from all counterfeits*, should be accepted as doing the greatest possible service to the Church of God. And attempts to this end ought not to be despised and discouraged, under a notion that it is but vanity and arrogance in such as are lately sprung up in an obscure part of the world, to pretend to add any thing on this subject, to the informations we have long since received from their fathers, who have lived in former times, in NEW-ENGLAND, and more noted countries. We cannot suppose that the Church of God is already possessed of all that light, in things of this nature, that ever God intends to give it; nor that all *Satan*'s lurking-places have already been found out. And must we let that grand adversary alone in his devices, to ensnare and ruin the souls of men, and confound the interest of religion amongst us, without attempting to know any thing further of his wiles than others have told us, though we see every day the most fatal effects of his hitherto unobserved snares, for fear we shall be guilty of vanity or want of modesty, in attempting to discern any thing that was not fully observed by our betters in former times; and that, whatever peculiar opportunities God gives us, by special dispensations of his providence, to see some things that were over-looked by them?

The remarkable things that have come to pass, in late times, respecting the state of religion, I think, will give every wise observer great reason to determine that the counterfeits of the grace of God's spirit are many more than have been generally taken notice of heretofore; and that, therefore, we stand in great need of having the certain and distinguishing nature and marks of genuine religion more clearly and distinctly set forth than has been usual; so that the difference between that and every thing that is spurious may be more plainly and surely discerned, and safely determined.

As enquiries of this nature are very important and necessary in themselves, so they are what the present state of religion in NEW-ENGLAND, and other parts of the *British dominions*, do in a peculiar manner render necessary at this season; and also do give peculiar opportunity for discoveries beyond what has been for a long time. Satan, transforming himself into an angel of light, has shewn himself in many of his artifices more plainly than ordinary; and given us opportunity to see more clearly and exactly the difference between his operations, and the saving operations and fruits of the spirit of Christ: And we should be much to blame, if we did not improve such an advantage.

The author of the ensuing treatise has not been negligent of these opportunities. He has not been an unwary or undiscerning observer of events that have occurred these ten years past. From the intimate acquaintance with him, which I have been favored with for many years, I have abundant reason to be satisfied that what has governed him in this publication, is no vanity of mind, no affectation to appear in the world as an author, nor any desire of applause; but a hearty concern for the glory of GOD, and the kingdom and interest of his Lord and Master, JESUS CHRIST: And, that as to the main things he here insists on, as belonging to the distinguishing nature and essence of true religion, he declares them, not only as being satisfied of them, from a careful consideration of important facts, (which he has had great opportunity to observe), and very clear experience in his own soul; but the most diligent search of the holy scriptures, and strict examination of the nature of things; and that his determinations concerning the nature of genuine religion, here exhibited to the world, have not been settled and published by him without long consideration, and maturely weighing all objections which could be thought of, taking all opportunities to hear what could be said by all sorts of persons against the principles here laid down, from time to time conversing freely and friendly with gentlemen in the *Arminian* scheme, having also had much acquaint-

ance, and frequent and long conversation with many of the people called *Separatists*, their preachers, and others.

And I cannot but express my sincere wishes, that what is here written by this reverend and pious author, may be taken notice of, read without prejudice, and thoroughly considered: As I verily believe, from my own perusal, it will be found a discourse wherein the proper essence and distinguishing nature of saving religion is deduced from the first principles of the oracles of God, in a manner tending to a great increase of light in this infinitely important subject....discovering truth, and, at the same time, shewing the grounds of it, or shewing what things are true, and also why they are true....manifesting the mutual dependance of the various parts of the true scheme of religion, and also the foundation of the whole.... things being reduced to their first principles in such a manner, that the connection and reason of things, as well as their agreement with the word of God, may be easily seen; and the true source of the dangerous errors concerning the terms of God's favor and qualifications for heaven, which are prevailing at this day, is plainly discovered; shewing their falsehood at the very foundation, and their inconsistence with the very first principles of the religion of the bible.

Such a discourse as this is very seasonable at this day: And although the author (as he declares) has aimed especially at the benefit of persons of vulgar capacity; and so has not labored for such ornaments of style and language as might best suit the taste of men of polite literature; yet the matter or substance that is to be found in this discourse, is what, I trust, will be very entertaining and profitable to every serious and impartial reader, whether learned or unlearned.

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Northampton, August 4, 1750.

THE AUTHOR's PREFACE.

WE are designed, by GOD our maker, for an endless existence. In this present life we just enter upon being, and are in a state introductory to a never-ending duration in another world, where we are to be forever unspeakably happy, or miserable, according to our present conduct. *This* is designed for a state of *probation*; and *that*, for a state of *rewards* and *punishments*. We are now upon trial, and God's eye is upon us every moment; and that picture of ourselves, which we exhibit in our conduct, the whole of it taken together, will give our proper character, and determine our state forever. This being designed for a state of trial, God now means to try us, that our conduct, under all the trials of life, may discover what we are, and ripen us for the day of judgment; when God will judge every man according to his works, and render to every one according to his doings. He does not intend, in the dispensations of his providence, to suit things to a state of ease and enjoyment, which is what this life is not designed for; but to a state of trial: He puts men into trying circumstances of set purpose, and, as it were, contrives methods to try them. One great end he has in view, is, that he may prove them, and know what is in their hearts.

He did not lead the *children of Israel* directly from *Egypt* to *Canaan*, but first through the *Red Sea*, and then out into a wilderness, where there was neither water, nor bread, nor flesh; and made them wander there forty years, that he might *try them, and prove them, and know what was in their hearts*....Deut. viii. 2. So, when the *christian religion* was introduced into the world, it was not in such a way as men would have chosen, but in a manner suited to a state of trial. The SON OF GOD did not come in outward glory, but in the form of a servant—not to reign as an earthly prince, but to die upon the cross: And his apostles made but a mean appearance in the eyes of the world; and that *sect* was every where spoken against, and persecuted; and many were the stumbling-blocks of the times: And these things were to try the temper of mankind. And when christian churches were erected by the indefatigable labors of St. PAUL and others, that God might thoroughly try every heart, he not only suffered the wicked world to rise in arms against them, but also let *Satan* loose, to transform himself into an *Angel of Light*, and, as it were, to inspire, and send forth his ministers, transformed into the apostles of Christ,

to vent heretical doctrines, and foment strife and division. In the mean while, the secure and wicked world looked on, pleased, no doubt, to see their debates and divisions, and glad they could have such a handle against *Christianity*, and so good a plea to justify their infidelity: And God delighted to have things under circumstances so perfectly well adapted to a state of trial. He loved to try the apostles, to see how they would be affected and act; when not only the world was in arms against them, but many of their own converts turned to be their enemies too, by the influence of false teachers. He loved to try private christians, to see how their hearts would be affected towards the truths of the gospel, and the true ministers of Christ, and towards their temporal interest, while the truths of the gospel were denied or perverted, and the true ministers of Christ despised and stigmatized by heretics, and their temporal interest exposed to the rage of a wicked, merciless world: And he loved to try hypocrites, to see whether they would not renounce the truth they pretended so highly to value, and become disaffected towards the ministers of Christ they seemed so dearly to love, and follow false teachers, or fall off to the world.

It is reasonable and fit, and a thing becoming and beautiful, that beings in a state of probation should be tried; and God looks upon the present outward ease and comfort even of his own people, as a matter of no importance, compared with things spiritual and eternal. Eternity, with all its importance, lies open to his view; and time appears as a point, and all its concerns as things comparatively of no worth. If the wicked are in prosperity, and the righteous in adversity, or all things come alike to all, God is well pleased, because things of time are of so little importance, and because such an administration of things is suited to a state of trial. There will be time enough hereafter for the righteous to be rewarded, and the wicked punished. In this view of things, we may, in a measure, understand the darkest, and account for the most mysterious, dispensations of divine providence, and discern the wisdom of the divine government.

It has doubtless appeared as a thing strange and dark to many pious persons, and occasioned not a little perplexity of mind, to observe what has come to pass in *New-England* since the year 1740....That there should be so general an out-pouring of the spirit—so many hundreds and thousands awakened all over the country, and such an almost universal external reformation, and so many receive the word with joy; and yet, after all, things come to be as they now are: so many fallen away to carnal security, and so many turned enthusiasts and heretics, and the country so generally settled in their prejudices against experimental religion and the doctrines of the gospel, and a flood of *Arminianism* and immorality, ready to deluge the land: but, as strange and dark as it may have seemed, yet doubtless if any of us had lived with the Israelites in the wilderness, or in the three first ages after Christ, or in the time of the reformation

from *Popery*, the dispensations of Divine Providence would, upon the whole, have appeared much more mysterious than they do now. And yet those were times when God was doing glorious things for his Church. —And indeed, it has happened in our day, however strange it may seem to us, no otherwise than our Savior foretold it commonly would under the gospel dispensation, at least till Satan is bound, that he may deceive the nations no more. The *sower* goes forth to sow, and some seed falls by the way-side, and some on stony, and some on thorny, and some on good ground; and while he is sowing good seed, an *enemy* in the night, the devil, unobserved, sows *tares*: Now when the *sun* is up, *i. e.* when new times come on, and trials approach, the main of the seed is lost; not only what fell by the way-side, but also what fell on the stony and thorny ground. And when the *good ground* is about to bring forth fruit, the *tares* begin to appear too....*Mat.* xiii. Thus it has always been.—This is a state of trial, and God has permitted so many sad and awful things to happen in times of reformation, with design to prove the children of men, and know what is in their hearts.

The young people almost all over *New-England* professed they would for ever renounce youthful vanities, and seek the Lord. "Well," God, in the course of his Providence, as it were, says, "I will try you." Seeming converts expressed great love to Christ, his truths, and ministers, and ways; "Well," says God, "I will try you." Multitudes, being enemies to all true religion, longed to see the whole reformation fall into disgrace, and things return to their own channel; and they sought for objections and stumbling-blocks: "Well," says God, "You may have "them, and I will try and see how you will be affected, and what you "will say, and whether you will be as glad when the cause of my SON "is betrayed by the miscarriages of those that profess to be his friends, "as the *Jews* of old were, when my SON himself was betrayed into their hands by *Judas*." Thus God means to try every one.

A compassionate sense of the exercises, which godly persons, especially among common people, might be under, in these evil days, while some are fallen away, and others are clapping their hands and rejoicing with all their hearts to see Zion laid waste; while *Arminians* are glossing their scheme, and appealing to reason and common sense, as though their principles were near or quite self-evident to all men of thought and candor; and while *enthusiasts* are going about as men inspired and immediately sent by the Almighty, pretending to extraordinary sanctity, and bold in it that they are so holy in themselves, and so entirely on the Lord's side, that all godly people must, and cannot but see as they do, and fall in with them, unless they are become blind, dead and carnal, and gotten back into the world; a compassionate sense, I say, of the exercises of mind, which pious persons among common people might have, in such a

trying situation of things, was the first motive which excited me to enter upon this work, which I now offer to the public: And to make divine truths plain to such, and to strip error naked before their eyes, that they might be established, and comforted, and quickened in their way heaven-ward, was the end I had in view: and, accordingly, I have labored very much to adapt myself to the lowest capacities, not meaning to write a book for the learned and polite, but for common people, and especially for those who are godly among them.

To these, therefore, that they may read what I have written with the greater profit, I will offer these two directions:

1. *Labor after determinate ideas of God, and a sense of his infinite glory.* This will spread a light over all the duties and doctrines of religion, and help you to understand the law and the gospel, and to pry into the mysteries, and discern the beauties, of the divine government. By much the greatest part of what I have written, besides shewing what GOD is, consists in but so many propositions deduced from the divine perfections. Begin here, therefore, and learn what GOD is, and then what the *moral law* is; and this will help you to understand what our ruin is, and what the way of our recovery by free grace through JESUS CHRIST. The Bible is designed for rational creatures, and has God for its author; and you may therefore depend upon it, that it contains a scheme perfectly rational, divine and glorious; and the pleasure of divine knowledge will a thousand times more than recompence all your reading, study and pains: only content not yourselves with a general superficial knowledge, but enter thoroughly into things.

2. *Practice, as well as read.* The end of reading and knowledge is practice: and holy practice will help you to understand what you read. *Love God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself;* and you cannot but understand me, while, in the first Discourse, I shew what is implied in these two great commands: and practice repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; and the second Discourse, which treats of the nature of the gospel, and a genuine compliance therewith, will naturally become plain and easy: and while you daily study divine truths in your heads, and digest them well in your hearts, and practice them in your lives, your knowledge and holiness will increase, and God's word and providence be better understood, your perplexing difficulties will be more solved, and you be established, strengthened and comforted, in your way heaven-ward; and your light shining before men, they will see your good works, and your Father which is in Heaven will be glorified.—All which are the hearty desire and prayer of

Your Servant in JESUS CHRIST,

JOSEPH BELLAMY.

Bethlem, April 25, 1750.

True Religion delineated.

DISCOURSE I.

SHEWING THE NATURE OF THE DIVINE LAW, AND WHEREIN CONSISTS A REAL CONFORMITY TO IT.

MAT. XXII. 37, 38, 39, 40.

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind....This is the first and great commandment....And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself....On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

THE INTRODUCTION.

TRUE religion consists in a conformity to the *law* of God, and in a compliance with the *gospel* of Christ. The religion of innocent man consisted only in a conformity to the law—the law of nature, with the addition of one positive precept: he had no need of gospel-grace. But when man lost his innocency, and became guilty and depraved—when he fell under the wrath of God and power of sin, he needed a redeemer and a sanctifier; and in the gospel a redeemer and a sanctifier are provided, and a way for our obtaining pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace is opened—a compliance with which does now, therefore, become part of the religion of a fallen creature. Now, if we can but rightly understand the *law*, and rightly understand the *gospel*, we may easily see wherein a conformity to the one, and a compliance with the other, does consist; and so what *true religion* is.

For the present, let us take the *law* under consideration.—And it will be proper to enquire into these following particu-

lars :—1. What duty does God require of us in his law ?—2. From what motives must that duty be done ?—3. What is that precise measure of duty which God requires in his law ? And a short, but very clear and plain answer to all these questions we have before us in our text ; which is the words of our blessed Savior, and in which he does upon design declare what the sum and substance of the law is. He had a question put to him in these words : "Master, which is the great commandment in the law ?" To which he answers—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. ; this is the first : The second is like unto it, &c." The ten commandments are summed up in these two ; and every duty enjoined in the law, and inculcated in the prophets, is but a deduction from these two, in which all are radically contained. A thorough understanding of these two will therefore give us an insight into all. Let us now, therefore, begin with taking the *first* of these into particular consideration.—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c....Here is—1. The duty required, viz. *love to God*.—2. The grounds and reasons of the duty intimated....*Because he is the Lord our God*.—3. The measure of duty required....*With all thy heart*, &c.

In discoursing upon these words, I will therefore endeavor to shew,

I. What is implied in love to God.

II. From what motives we are required to love him.

III. What is the measure of love which is required.

SECTION I.

SHEWING WHAT IS IMPLIED IN LOVE TO GOD.

I. I am to shew *what is implied in love to* GOD.

And

1. *A true knowledge of God* is *implied ;* for this lays the foundation of love. A spiritual sight of God, and a sense of his glory and beauty, begets love. When HE that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in our hearts, and gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God ; and when we, with open face, behold, as in a glass, the glory of the

Lord, then we are changed into the same image: the temper and frame of our hearts become like God's: (to speak after the manner of men) we begin to feel towards God, in a measure, as he does towards himself; i. e. to love him with all our hearts....II *Cor.* iii. 18. & iv. 6. For now we begin to perceive the grounds and reasons of that infinite esteem he has of himself, and infinite complacency in himself, and why he commands all the world to love and adore him: And the same grounds and reasons which move him thus to love himself, and command all the world to do so too, do enkindle the divine flame in our hearts. When we see God, in a measure, such as he sees himself to be, and have a sense of his glory and beauty in being what he is, in a measure, as he himself has, then we begin to love him with the same kind of love, and from the same motives, as he himself does; only in an infinitely inferior degree. This sight and sense of God discovers the grounds of love to him: We see why he requires us to love him, and why we ought to love him—how right and fit it is; and so we cannot but love him.

This true knowledge of God supposes, that, in a measure, we see God to be just such a one as he is; and, in a measure, have a sense of his infinite glory and beauty in being such. For if our apprehensions of God are not right, it is not *God* we love, but only a false image of him framed in our own fancy.* And if we have not a sense of his glory and beauty

* How false and dangerous, therefore, is that principle, "That it is no matter what men's principles are, if their lives be but good."—Just as if that external conformity to the law might be called a good life, which does not proceed from a genuine love to God in the heart: or just as if a man might have a genuine love to God in his heart, without having right apprehensions of him!...or just as if a man might have right apprehensions of God, let his apprehensions be what they will! Upon this principle, *Heathens*, *Jews*, and *Mahometans*, may be saved as well as *Christians*. And, upon this principle, the heathen nations need not much trouble themselves to know which is the right *God* among all the gods that are worshipped in the world; for it is no matter *which God* they think is the true, if their lives are but good.—But why has God revealed himself in his word, if right apprehensions of God be a matter of such indifference in religion? and why did St. *Paul* take such pains to convert the heathen nations to Christianity, and so much fill up his epistles to them afterwards with *doctrinal points*, and be so strenuous as to say, "If an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel, LET HIM BE ACCURSED," if right apprehensions of God, and right principles of religion be a

in being what he is, it is impossible we should truly love and esteem him for being such. To love God for being what he is, and yet not to have any sense of his glory and beauty in being such, implies a contradiction; for it supposes we have a sense of his glory and beauty when we have not: a sense of the beauty and amiableness of any object being always necessarily implied in love to it. Where no beauty or amiableness is seen there can be no love. Love cannot be forced. Forced love is no love. If we are obliged to try to force ourselves to love any body, it is a sign they are very odious in our eyes, or at least that we see no beauty or amiableness in them, no form or comeliness, wherefore we should desire or delight in them....*Cant.* viii. 7. In all cases, so far as we see beauty, so far we love, and no farther.

Most certainly that knowledge of God which is necessary to lay a foundation of genuine love to him, implies not only right apprehensions of what he is, but also a sense of his glory and beauty in being such; for such a knowledge of God as consists merely in *speculation*, let it rise ever so high, and be

matter of such indifference?—It is strange that such a notion should be ever once mentioned by any that pretend to be Christians, since it is subversive of the whole Christian religion: making *Christianity* no safer a way to heaven than *Paganism*: Yea, such a principle naturally tends to make all those who imbibe it leave *love to God* and *faith in Christ* out of their religion, and quiet themselves with a mere empty form of external duties: Or, in other words, it tends to make them leave the *law* and the *gospel* out of their religion, and quiet themselves with mere *heathen morality*; for a man cannot attain to *love to God* and *faith in Christ*, without *right apprehensions of God and Christ*: Or, in other words, a man cannot attain to a real conformity to the law, and to a genuine compliance with the gospel, unless his principles respecting the law and gospel are right: but a man may attain to a good life, *externally*, let his apprehensions of *God* and *Christ*, of *law* and *gospel*, and all his principles of religion, be what they will. Let him be a heathen, or Jew, a Mahometan, or Christian; yea, if a man be an Atheist, he may live a good life externally; for any man has sufficient power to do every external duty; and it is many times much to men's honor and worldly interest to *appear righteous outwardly before men*....Mat. xxiii. 28.

N. B. What is here said, may, with a little alteration, be as well applied to some other sorts of men. So the *Moravians* say "They care not what men's principles are, if they do but love the Savior." So, in *New-England*, there are multitudes who care little or nothing what doctrines men believe, if they are but full of FLAMING ZEAL. Just as if it were no matter what kind of *Savior* we frame an idea of, if we do but love him; nor what we are zealous about, if we are but FLAMING HOT.

ever so clear, will never move us to love him. Mere speculation, where there is no sense of beauty, will no sooner fill the heart with love, than a looking-glass will be filled with love by the image of a beautiful countenance, which looks into it: and a mere speculative knowledge of God, will not, cannot, beget a sense of his beauty in being what he is, when there is naturally no disposition in our hearts to account him glorious in being such, but wholly to the contrary. Rom. viii. 7.... *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* When natures are in perfect contrariety, (the one sinful, and the other holy,) the more they are known to each other, the more is mutual hatred stirred up, and their entire aversion to each other becomes more sensible. The more they know of one another, the greater is their dislike, and the plainer do they feel it.—Doubtless the fallen angels have a great degree of speculative knowledge; they have a very clear sight and great sense of what God is: but the more they know of God, the more they hate him: *i. e.* their hatred and aversion is stirred up the more, and they feel it plainer. So, awakened sinners, when under deep and thorough conviction, have comparatively a very clear sight and great sense of God; but it only makes them see and feel their native enmity, which before lay hid. A sight and sense of what God is, makes them see and feel what his law is, and so what their duty is, and so what their sinfulness is, and so what their danger is: It makes the *commandment come*, and so *sin revives*, and *they die*....Rom. vii. 7, 8, 9. The clearer sight and the greater sense they have of what God is, the more plainly do they perceive that perfect contrariety between his nature and their's: their aversion to God becomes discernible: they begin to see what enemies they are to him: and so the secret hypocrisy there has been in all their pretences of love, is discovered—and so their high conceit of their goodness, and all their hopes of finding favor in the sight of God upon the account of it, cease, die away, and come to nothing. *Sin revived, and I died.* The greater sight and sense they have of what God is, the plainer do they feel that they have no love to him; but the greatest aversion: for the

more they know of God, the more their native enmity is stirred up. So, again, as soon as ever an unregenerate sinner enters into the world of spirits, where he has a much clearer sight and greater sense of what God is, immediately his native enmity works to perfection, and he blasphemes like a very devil: and that although perhaps he died full of seeming love and joy. As the *Galatians*, who once loved *Paul*, so as that they could even have plucked out their eyes and given them to him; yet, when afterwards they came to know more clearly what kind of man he was, then they turned his enemies: And so, finally, all the wicked, at the day of Judgment, when they shall see very clearly what God is, will thereby only have all the enmity of their hearts stirred to perfection.—From all which it is exceedingly manifest that the clearest speculative knowledge of God, is so far from bringing an unholy heart to love God, that it will only stir up the more aversion; and therefore that knowledge of God which lays the foundation of love, must imply not only right apprehensions of what God is, but also a sense of his glory and beauty in being such.*

Wicked men and devils may know what God is, but none but holy beings have *any sense* of his infinite glory and beauty in being such; which *sense*, in scripture-language, is called *seeing* and *knowing*. I. John iii. 6. *Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.* III. John, ver. 11. *He that doth evil hath not seen God.* I. John ii. 4. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not*

* I grant, that if all our enmity against God arise merely from our conceiving him to be our enemy, then a manifestation of his love to our souls will cause our enmity to cease, and bring us to love him; nor will there be any need of a sense of the moral excellency of his nature to produce it; and so there will be no need of the sanctifying influences of the holy spirit. A manifestation of the love of God to our souls will effectually change us....and thus a man may be under great terrors from a sense of the wrath of God, and may see the enmity of his heart in this sense; and may afterwards have, as he thinks, great manifestations of the love of God, and be filled with love and joy; and after all, never truly see the plague of his own heart, nor have his nature renewed: and a man's having experienced such a false conversion, naturally leads him to frame wrong notions of religion, and blinds his mind against the truth. Many of the *Antinomian* principles take rise from this quarter.

in him. Because wicked men have no sense of his glory and beauty, therefore they are said not to know God: For all knowledge without this is vain; it is but the form of knowledge ....*Rom.* ii. 20. It will never enkindle divine love. And, in scripture, sinners are said to be *blind*, because, after all their light and knowledge, they have no sense of God's glory in being what he is, and so have no heart to love him. And hence also they are said to be *dead.* They know nothing of the ineffable glory of the divine nature, and the love of God is not in them....*John* v. 42. and viii. 19, 55.

2. Another thing implied in love to God is *esteem.* Esteem, strictly speaking, is that high and exalted thought of, and value for, any thing, which arises from a sight and sense of its own intrinsic worth, excellency and beauty. So, a sense of the infinite dignity, greatness, glory, excellency and beauty of the most high God, begets in us high and exalted thoughts of him, and makes us admire, wonder and adore. Hence, the heavenly hosts fall down before the throne, and, under a sense of his ineffable glory, continually cry, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the whole earth is full of thy glory.* And Saints here below, while they behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are ravished; they esteem, they admire, they wonder and adore; and, under some feebler sense of the ineffable glory of the divine nature, they begin to feel as they do in heaven, and to speak their language, and say, "Who is a God like unto thee! thy name alone is excellent, and thy glory is exalted above the heavens."

This high esteem of God disposes and inclines the heart to acquiesce, yea, to exult, in all the high prerogatives God assumes to himself.

God, from a consciousness of his own infinite excellency, his entire right to and absolute authority over all things, is disposed to take state to himself, and honor and majesty, the kingdom, the power and the glory; and he sets up himself as the most high God, supreme Lord and sovereign Governor of the whole world, and bids all worlds adore him, and be in a most

perfect subjection to him, and that with all their hearts; and esteems the wretch, who does not account this his highest happiness, worthy of eternal damnation. God thinks it infinitely becomes him to set up himself for a GOD, and to command all the world to adore him, upon pain of eternal damnation. He thinks himself fit to govern the world, and that the throne is his proper place, and that all love, honor and obedience are his due. "I am the Lord, (says he) and besides me there is no God. "I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give "to another. And thus and thus shall ye do, for I am the "Lord. And cursed be every one that continues not in all "things written in the book of the law to do them." Now it would be infinitely wicked for the highest angel in Heaven to assume any of this honor to himself; but it infinitely becomes the most high God thus to do. And when we see his infinite dignity, greatness, glory and excellency, and begin rightly to esteem him, then his conduct, in all this, will begin to appear infinitely right and fit, and so infinitely beautiful and ravishing, and worthy to be rejoiced and exulted in. Psalm xci. 1.... *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice: let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof.*

And a sight and sense of the supreme, infinite glory and excellency of the divine nature, will not only make us glad that he is GOD, and KING, and GOVERNOR; but also exceedingly glad that we live under his government, and are to be his subjects and servants, and to be at his disposal....It will shew us the grounds and reasons of his law...how infinitely right and fit it is that we should love him with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing; how infinitely unfit and wrong the least sin is, and how just the threatened punishment: and, at the same time, it will help us to see that all the nations of the earth are as a drop of the bucket, or small dust of the balance, before him; and that we ourselves are nothing and less than nothing in his sight. So that a right sight and sense of the supreme, infinite glory of God, will make us esteem him, so as to be glad that he is on the throne, and we at his footstool....that he is king, and we his

subjects...that he rules and reigns, and that we are absolutely in subjection, and absolutely at his disposal. In a word, we shall be glad to see him take all that honor to himself which he does, and shall be heartily reconciled to his government, and cordially willing to take our own proper places ; and hereby a foundation will begin to be laid in our hearts for all things to come to rights. Job xlii. 5, 6....*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear : but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.* Isa. ii. 11...*The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be brought down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted*....And that all this is implied in a genuine love to God, not only the reason of the thing and the plain tenor of scripture manifest, but it is even self-evident ; for if we do not so esteem God as to be thus glad to have *him* take his place, and we *ours*, it argues secret dislike, and proves that there is secret rebellion in our hearts : Thus, therefore, must we esteem the glorious God, or be reputed rebels in his sight.

3. Another thing implied in love to God may be called *benevolence*. When we are acquainted with any person, and he appears very excellent in our eyes, and we highly esteem him, it is natural now heartily to wish him well ; we are concerned for his interest ; we are glad to see it go well with him, and sorry to see it go ill with him ; and ready at all times chearfully to do what we can to promote his welfare. Thus *Jonathan* felt towards *David* : and thus love to God will make us feel towards him, his honor and interest in the world. When God is seen in his infinite dignity, greatness, glory and excellency, as the most high God, supreme Lord and sovereign governor of the whole world, and a sense of his infinite worthiness is hereby raised in our hearts, this enkindles a holy benevolence, the natural language of which is, *Let God be glorified*....Psalm xcvi. 7, 8. *And be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens : let thy glory be above all the earth*....Psalm lvii. 5, 11.

This holy disposition sometimes expresses itself in *earnest longings* that God would glorify himself, and honor his great

name ; and bring all the world into an entire subjection to him. And hence this is the natural language of true love....*Our father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven*....Mat. vi. 9, 10. And hence, when God is about to bring to pass great and glorious things to the honor of his great name, it causes great joy and rejoicing. Psalm xcvi. 11, 12, 13....*Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad : let the sea roar and the fulness thereof : let the field be joyful, and all that is therein : then shall the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord ; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth : he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.*

And hence again, when God seems to be about to do, or permit, any thing, which, as it seems to us, tends most certainly to bring reproach and dishonor upon his great name, it occasions the greatest anguish and distress. Thus says God to *Moses*, " This is a stiff-necked people, let me alone that I may destroy " them in a moment, and I will make of thee a great nation." But says Moses, " What will become of thy great name ? " What will the *Egyptians* say ? And what will the nations all " round about say ?" And he mourns and wrestles, cries and prays, begs and pleads, as if his heart would break : and says he, " If I may not be heard, but this dishonor and reproach " must come upon thy great name, it cannot comfort me to tell " me of making of me a great nation : pray let me rather die " and be forgotten forever, and let not my name be numbered " among the living ; but let it be blotted out of thy book." Well, says God, " I will hear thee. But, as truly as I live, I " will never put up these affronts ; but the whole world shall " know what a holy and sin-hating God I am, and be filled " with my glory : for the carcases of all those who have treated me thus shall fall in the wilderness ; and here they shall " wander till forty years are accomplished, and then I will do " so and so to their children, and so secure the honor of my " power, truth and faithfulness." And now Moses is content to live in the wilderness, and do, and suffer, and undergo any

thing, if God will but take care of his great name. *Exod.* xxxii. *Numb.* xiv....And as it is distressing to a true lover of God, to see God's name, and works, and ways fall into reproach and contempt; and as, on the other hand, there is no greater joy than to see God glorify himself *(Exod.* xv.*)*; hence, this world, even on this account, may be fitly called *a vale of tears* to the people of God, because here they are always seeing reproach and contempt cast upon God, his name, his works and his ways: And hence, at the day of judgment, all these tears shall be wiped away from their eyes, because then they shall see all things turned to the advancement of the glory of his great name, throughout the endless ages of eternity....*Rev.* xix. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Again, this divine benevolence, or wishing that God may be glorified, sometimes expresses itself in earnest longings that all worlds might join together to bless and praise the name of the Lord; and it appears infinitely fit and right, and so infinitely beautiful and ravishing, that the whole intelligent creation should forever join in the most solemn adoration: yea, and that sun, moon, stars....earth, air, sea....birds, beasts, fishes.... mountains and hills, and all things, should, in their way, display the divine perfections, and praise the name of the Lord, because his name alone is excellent, and his glory is exalted above the heavens. And hence the pious *Psalmist* so often breathes this divine language: Psalm ciii. 20, 21, 22....*Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength—that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word....Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.... Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion: Bless the Lord, O my soul.* Psalm cxlviii, 1—13....*Praise ye the Lord....Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights....Praise him, all ye his angels: praise him, all his hosts....Praise him, sun and moon, &c.—Let them praise the name of the Lord; for his name alone is excellent, &c.* See also the 95, 96, 97, & 98th Psalms, &c. &c.

Lastly, from this divine benevolence arises a free and genuine disposition to consecrate and give up ourselves entirely to

the Lord forever—to walk in all his ways, and keep all his commands, seeking his glory: For if we desire that God may be glorified, we shall naturally be disposed to seek his glory. A sight and sense of the infinite dignity, greatness, glory and excellency of God, the great creator, preserver and governor of the world, who has an entire right unto, and an absolute authority over all things, makes it appear infinitely fit that all things should be for him, and him alone; and that we should be entirely for him, and wholly devoted to him; and that it is infinitely wrong to live to ourselves, and make our own interest our last end. The same views which make the godly earnestly long to have God glorify himself, and to have all the world join to give him glory, thoroughly engage them for their parts to live to God. After *David* had called upon all others to bless the Lord, he concludes with, *Bless the Lord, O my soul:* And this is the language of heaven—Rev. iv. 11.... *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.* And it was their *maxim* in the Apostles' days, *Whether they ate or drank, or whatever they did, all must be done to the glory of God*....I Cor. x. 31. And it was their way, *not to live to themselves, but to the Lord*....II Cor. v. 15: Yea, *Whether they lived, to live to the Lord; or whether they died, to die to the Lord*....Rom. xiv. 7, 8. This was what they commended.... *Phil.* ii. 20, 21. And this was what they enjoined, as that, in which the very spirit of true religion consisted....*Eph.* vi. 5, 6, 7.—I *Cor.* vi. 20.—*Rom.* xii. 1. & vii. 4.

All rational creatures, acting as such, are always influenced by motives in their whole conduct. Those things are always the most powerful motives, which appear to us most worthy of our choice. The principal motive to an action, is always the ultimate end of the action: Hence, if God, his honor and interest, appear to us as the supreme good, and most worthy of our choice, then God, his honor, and interest, will be the principal motive and ultimate end of all we do. If we love God supremely, we shall live to him ultimately; if we love him with

all our hearts, we shall serve him with all our souls : Just as, on the other hand, if we love ourselves above all, then self-love will absolutely govern us in all things ; if self-interest be the principal motive, then self-interest will be the last end, in our whole conduct : Thus, then, we see, that if GOD be highest in esteem, then *God's interest* will be the principal motive and the last end of the whole conduct of rational creatures ; and if *self* be the highest in esteem, then *self-interest* will be the principal motive and last end : And hence we may observe, that where *self-interest* governs men, they are considered in scripture as *serving themselves*....Hos. x. 1.—Zec. vii. 5, 6. And where *God's interest* governs, they are considered as *serving the Lord* ....II Cor. v. 15.—Gal. i. 10.—Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7. compared with Tit. ii. 9, 10. To love GOD so as to serve *him*, is what the law requires ;—to love *self*, so as to serve *self*, is *rebellion* against the majesty of heaven : And the same infinite obligations which we are under to love God above ourselves ; even the same infinite obligations are we under to live to God ultimately, and not to ourselves : And therefore it is as great a sin to live to ourselves ultimately, as it is to love ourselves supremely.

4. and lastly. *Delight* in God, is also implied in love to him. By delight we commonly mean that pleasure, sweetness and satisfaction, which we take in any thing that is very dear to us. When a man appears very excellent to us, and we esteem him, and wish him all good, we also, at the same time, feel a delight in him, and a sweetness in his company and conversation ; we long to see him when absent ; we rejoice in his presence ; the enjoyment of him tends to make us happy : So, when a holy soul beholds God in the infinite moral excellency and beauty of his nature, and loves him supremely, and is devoted to him entirely, now also he delights in him superlatively. His delight and complacency is as great as his esteem, and arises from a sense of the same moral excellency and beauty. From this delight in God arise longings after further acquaintance with him, and greater nearness to him. Job xxiii. 3...*O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat !*—Longings

after communion with him. Psalm lxiii. 1, 2....*O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee: my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is....To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.* Verse 8....*My soul followeth hard after thee.* A holy rejoicing in God. Hab. iii. 17, 18....*Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls....Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* Finally, from this delight in God arises a holy disposition to renounce all other things, and live wholly upon him, and take up everlasting content in him, and in him alone. Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26....*Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee....My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.* The vain man takes content in vain company; the worldly man takes content in riches; the ambitious man in honor and applause; the philosopher in philosophical speculations; the legal hypocrite in his round of duties; the evangelical hypocrite in his experiences, his discoveries, his joys, his raptures, and confident expectation of heaven: But the true lover of God takes his content in God himself. *Psalm* iv. 6, 7. And thus we see what is implied in love to God.

And now, that this is a right representation of the nature of that love which is required in the first and great commandment of the law, upon which chiefly all the law and the prophets hang, is manifest, not only from the reason of the thing, and from what has been already said, but also from this, that such a love to God as this *lays a sure and firm foundation for all holy obedience.* That love to God is of the right kind, which will effectually influence us to keep his commands. *John* xv. 14. I. *John* ii. 3, 4, 5. But it is evident, from the nature of things, that such a love as this will effectually influence us to do so. As self-love naturally causes us to set up self and seek self-interest, so this love to God will naturally influence us to set up God

and seek his interest. As delight in the world naturally makes us seek after the enjoyment of the world, so this delight in God will naturally influence us to seek after the enjoyment of God: And while we love God primarily for being what he is, we cannot but, for the same reason, love his law, which is a transcript of his nature, and love to conform to it. If we loved him only from self-love, from the fear of hell, or from the hopes of heaven, we might, at the same time, hate his law: but if we love him for being what he is, we cannot but love to be like him; which is what his law requires. To suppose that a man loves God supremely for what he is, and yet does not love to be like him, is an evident contradiction. It is to suppose a thing supremely loved; and yet, at the same time, not loved at all: So that, to a demonstration, this is the very kind of love which the Lord our God requires of us. So, saints in heaven love God perfectly, and so the good man on earth begins, in a weak and feeble manner, to love God: for there is but one kind of love required in the law; and so but one kind of love which is of the right sort: for no kind of love can be of the right sort, but that very kind of love which the law requires: There is, therefore, no difference between their love in heaven, and ours here upon earth, but only in degree.

SECTION II.

SHEWING FROM WHAT MOTIVES TRUE LOVE TO GOD TAKES ITS RISE.

II. I now proceed to shew more particularly *from what motives we are required thus to love God.* Indeed, I have done this in part already; for I have been obliged all along, in shewing what is implied in love to God, to keep my eye upon the first and chief ground and reason of love, namely, what God is in himself. But there are other considerations which increase our obligations to love him and live to him; which ought, therefore, to come into the account: And I design here to take a general view of all the reasons and motives which ought to influence us to love the Lord our God; all which are implied in

those words, *The Lord thy God. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, i. e. because he is the LORD and our GOD.

1. The first and chief motive which is to influence us to love God with all our hearts, is *his infinite dignity and greatness, glory and excellency;* or, in one word, *his infinite amiableness.*—We are to love him with all our hearts, because he is the LORD—because he is what he is, and just such a Being as he is.—On this account, primarily, and antecedent to all other considerations, he is infinitely amiable; and, therefore, on this account, primarily, and antecedent to all other considerations, ought he to appear infinitely amiable in our eyes. This is the first and chief reason and ground upon which his *law* is founded, I AM THE LORD...(*Exod.* xx. 2.—*Lev.* xix.) This, therefore, ought to be the first and chief motive to influence us to obey. The principal reason which moves him to require us to love him, ought to be the principal motive of our love. If the fundamental reason of his requiring us to love him with all our hearts, is because he is what he is, and yet the bottom of our love be something else, then our love is not what his law requires, but a thing of quite another nature: Yea, if the foundation of our love to God is not because he is what he is, in truth, we love him not at all. If I feel a sort of respect to one of my neighbors, who is very kind to me, and either do not know what sort of man he is, or, if I do, yet do not like him, it is plain, it is his kindnesses I love, and not his person; and all my seeming love to him is nothing but self-love in another shape: And let him cease being kind to me, and my love will cease: Let him cross me, and I shall hate him. *Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face,* (Job i. 11), said the devil concerning *Job;* and, indeed, Job would have done so, had not his love to God taken its rise from another motive than God's kindnesses to him. But why need I multiply words? For it seems even self-evident that God's loveliness ought to be the first and chief thing for which we love him.

Now, God is infinitely lovely, because he is what he is; or, in other words, his infinite dignity and greatness, glory and ex-

cellency, are the result of his natural and moral perfections: So that it is a clear sight and realizing sense of his natural and moral perfections, as they are revealed in his works and in his word, that make him appear, to a HOLY soul, as a Being of infinite dignity and greatness, glory and excellency. Thus, the Queen of *Sheba*, seeing and conversing with *Solomon*, and viewing his works, under a sense of the large and noble endowments of his mind, was even ravished; and cried out, *The one half was not told me!* And thus the holy and divinely enlightened soul, upon seeing God, reading his word, and meditating on his wonderful works, under a sense of his divine and incomprehensible perfections, is ravished with his infinite dignity, majesty, greatness, glory and excellency; and loves, admires, and adores; and says, *Who is a God like unto thee!*

His natural perfections are,

(1.) His *infinite understanding*, whereby he knows himself, and all things possible, and beholds all things past, present and to come, at one all-comprehensive view. So that, from everlasting to everlasting, his knowledge can neither increase nor diminish, or his views of things suffer the least variation; being always absolutely complete, and consequently necessarily always the same.

(2.) His *almighty power*, whereby he is able, with infinite ease, to do any thing that he pleases.

And his moral perfections are,

(1.) His *infinite wisdom*, whereby he is able, and is inclined to contrive and order all things, in all worlds, for the best ends, and after the best manner.

(2.) His *perfect holiness*, whereby he is inclined infinitely to love right, and hate wrong: Or, according to scripture-phrase, *to love righteousness and hate iniquity.*

(3.) His *impartial justice*, whereby he is unchangeably inclined to render to every one according to his deserts.

(4.) His *infinite goodness*, whereby he can find in his heart to bestow the greatest favors upon his creatures, if he pleases; and is inclined to bestow all that is best, all things considered.

(5.) His *truth* and *faithfulness*, whereby he is inclined to fulfil all his will, according to his word: So that there is an everlasting harmony between his will, his word, and his performance.

And his being, and all his natural and moral perfections, and his glory and blessedness, which result from them, he has in himself, and of himself, underived; and is necessarily infinite, eternal, unchangeable, in all; and so, absolutely independent, self-sufficient and all-sufficient.

"This is the God, whom we do love!
"This is the God, whom we adore!
"In him we trust....to him we live;
"He is our all, for evermore.

Now there are three ways by which the perfections of God are discovered to the children of men: By his works, by his word, and by his spirit. By the two first, we see him to be what he is;—by the last, we behold his infinite glory in being such:—The two first produce a speculative knowledge; the last, a sense of moral beauty.

First. These perfections of God are discovered *by his works*, i. e. by his *creating*, *preserving*, and *governing the world;* and by his *redeeming*, *sanctifying*, and *saving his people.*

1. *By his creating the world.* He it is, who has stretched abroad the heavens as a curtain, and spread them out as a tent to dwell in....who has created the sun, moon and stars, and appointed them their courses....who has hung the earth upon nothing....who has fixed the mountains, and bounded the seas, and formed every living creature. All the heavenly hosts he hath made, and created all the nations that dwell upon the earth: and the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the sea, and every creeping thing, are the works of his hands: and the meanest of his works are full of unsearchable wonders, far surpassing our understanding: *So that the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead:* As St. *Paul* observes, in *Rom.* i. 20.

2. *By his preserving the world.* His eyes run to and fro throughout all the world, beholding every thing. His eyes are

upon all his works; so that even the sparrows are not forgotten by him, and the very hairs of our head are all numbered: And he holds all things in being; and the opening of his hand fills the desires of every living creature: even the whole family of heaven and earth live upon his goodness, and are maintained by his bounty: In a word, his infinite understanding sees all....his infinite power upholds all....his infinite wisdom takes care of all, and his infinite goodness provides for all—and that every moment; so that the invisible things of God are discovered in preserving as well as in creating the world: And hence, when the pious *Psalmist* meditates on the works of creation and preservation, he sees God in them, and views his perfections, and is touched at heart with a sense of his glory; and is filled with high and exalted, and with admiring and adoring thoughts of God. So, Psalm xix. 1....*The heavens declare the glory of the Lord*, &c. And Psalm xcv. 1....*O come let us sing unto the Lord*, &c.—But why?—Verse 3...*For the Lord is a great God, and a great King, above all gods.*—But how does this appear? Why, (ver. 4, 5.) *In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also: The sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land:* Ver. 6...*O, therefore, come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.* And again, in Psal. xcvi. 1....*O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth.*—But why?—Ver. 4...*For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: He is to be feared above all gods.*—But wherein does this appear?—Why, (ver. 5.) *All the gods of the nations are idols; but the* LORD *made the heavens.* And once more, in Psal. civ. 1, 2, &c....*Bless the Lord, O my soul.*—But why?....*Thou art very great: thou art clothed with honor and majesty.*—But how does this appear?—Why, *Thou hast stretched out the heavens as a curtain.* And ver. 5....*And laid the foundations of the earth, that it cannot be removed for ever.* And ver. 27....*All wait upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.* Ver. 28....*That thou givest them, they gather: thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good.*—And throughout the whole *Psalm* he is meditating

on the creation and preservation of the world; and viewing the divine perfections therein discovered, and admiring the divine glory, and wondering and adoring; and finally concludes with, *Bless the Lord, O my soul: Praise ye the Lord.* But

3. *His perfections are still much more eminently displayed in that moral government which he maintains over the intelligent part of the creation; especially his moral perfections.* In the works of nature his natural perfections are to be seen: but, in his moral government of the world, he acts out his heart, and shews the temper of his mind: Indeed, all the perfections of God are to be seen in the work of creation, if we view angels and men, and consider what they were, as they came first out of his hands—holy and pure; But still God's conduct towards them, under the character of their King and Governor, more evidently discovers the very temper of his heart. As the tree is known by the fruit, so God's moral perfections may be known by his moral government of the world. The whole world was created for a stage, on which a variety of scenes were to be opened; in and by all which, God designed to exhibit a most exact image of himself: For, as God loves himself infinitely for being what he is, so he takes infinite delight in acting forth and expressing all his heart. He loves to see his nature and image shine in all his works, and to behold the whole world filled with his glory; and he perfectly loves to have his conduct, the whole of it taken together, an *exact* resemblance of himself; and infinitely abhors, in his public conduct, in the least to counteract the temper of his heart; so as, by his public conduct, to seem to be what indeed he is not: So that, in his moral government of the world, we may see his inward disposition, and discern the true nature of his moral perfections: And indeed all his perfections are herein discovered; particularly,

(1.) *His infinite understanding.* High on his throne in heaven he sits, and all his vast dominions lie open to his view: His all-seeing eye views all his courts above, and sees under the whole heavens, looks through the earth, and pierces all the dark caverns of hell; so that his acquaintance with all worlds and all

things is absolutely perfect and complete: He can behold all the solemn worship of heaven, and the inmost thoughts of all that great assembly: he can behold all the sin, misery and confusion that overspread the whole earth, and the inmost temper of every mortal; and look through hell, and see all the rebellion, and blasphemy, and cunning devices of those infernal fiends;—and all this at one all-comprehending view: And thus, as high Governor of the whole world, he continually beholds all things; whereby a foundation is laid for the exercise of all his other perfections in his government over all. See the omniscience of God elegantly described in *Psal.* cxxxix. 1—12. And being perfectly acquainted with himself, as well as with all his creatures, he cannot but see what conduct from him towards them, will, all things considered, be most right, and fit, and amiable, and most becoming such an one as he is; and also what conduct from them to him is his due; and their duty. By his infinite understanding, he is perfectly acquainted with right and wrong —with what is fit, and what unfit: And, by the moral rectitude of his nature, he infinitely loves the one and hates the other, and is disposed to conduct accordingly;—of which more presently. Psal. cxlvii. 1....*Praise ye the Lord, for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.* —But why?—Ver. 5...*Great is our Lord and of great power;* HIS UNDERSTANDING IS INFINITE.—But wherein does that appear?—Why, (ver. 4.) *He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them* ALL *by their names.* Now, if the infinite understanding of God may be seen in this one particular, much more is it in the regular ordering and disposing of all things, throughout the whole universe; and that, not only in the *natural*, but also in the *moral* world.

(2) *His infinite power* is displayed in the government of the world: For he does according to his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; so that none can stay his hand, or hinder the execution of his designs. Have rebellions broken out in any part of his dominions?—he has manifestly had the rebels entirely in his hands: They have lain

absolutely at his mercy; and he has dealt with them according to his sovereign pleasure; and none has been able to make any resistance; nor has there been any to deliver them out of his hands. When rebellion broke out in heaven, he crushed the rebels in a moment: They fell beneath the weight of his hand ...they felt his power....they despaired...they sunk to hell; and there he reserves them in chains; nor can they stir from their dark abode, but by his special permission. And when rebellion broke out upon earth, the rebels were equally in his hands, and at his mercy, unable to make any resistance; although he was pleased, in his infinite wisdom, to take another method with them: But he has since discovered his power, in treading down his implacable enemies, under foot, many a time: He destroyed the old world, burned *Sodom*, drowned *Pharaoh* and his hosts, and turned *Nebuchadnezzar* into a beast. If his enemies have exalted themselves, yet he has been above them—brought them down; and discovered to all the world that they are in his hands, and without strength, at his disposal: Or if he has suffered them to go on and prosper, and exalt themselves greatly, yet still he has been above them, and has accomplished his designs by them, and at last has brought them down.—Haughty *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he had broken the nations to pieces, as if he had been the hammer of the whole earth, now thought himself *somebody;* and *Alexander* the Great, when conquering the world, aspired to be thought the son of *Jupiter:* But the most high God, the great and almighty Governor of the world, always had such scourges of mankind only as a rod in his hand, with which he has executed judgment upon a wicked world. *Howbeit, they meant not so, neither did their hearts think so:* But it was in their hearts to gratify their ambition, avarice, and revenge. However, he was above them; and always such have been, in his hands, as *the ax is in the hands of him that heweth therewith*, or as *the saw is in the hands of him that shaketh it;* or as *the rod is in the hand of him that lifteth it up.* And when he has done with the rod, he always breaks it and burns it: See *Isaiah* x. 5—19.

And as this great King has discovered his almighty power, by crushing rebellions in his kingdom, and subduing rebels, so he has, also, in protecting his friends, and working deliverance for his people: He made a path for his people through the sea; he led them through the wilderness: He gave them water to drink out of the rock; and fed them with angels' food: In the day time he led them by a cloud, and all the night with the light of fire: He brought them to the promised land, and drove out the heathen before them; and, in all their distresses, whenever they cried unto him, he delivered them: And as the supreme Governor of the world, in the days of old, did thus discover his almighty power in governing among his intelligent creatures, so he is still, in various ways and manners, in his providential dispensations, evidently discovering that he can do all things: And his people see it and believe it; and admire and adore:—Read *Psal.* cv.

(3.) Again, *His infinite wisdom* is discovered in an endless variety of instances—in all his government throughout all his dominions—in his managing all things to the glory of his Majesty....to the good of his loyal subjects, and to the confusion of his foes. There has never any thing happened in all his dominions, and never will, but has been, and shall be made entirely subservient to his honor and glory: Even the contempt cast upon him by his rebellious subjects, he turns to his greater glory; as in the case of *Pharaoh*, who set up himself against God, and said, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey him? I know not the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.* And he exalted himself, and dealt proudly and haughtily; and hardened his heart, and was resolved he would not regard God, nor be bowed nor conquered by him; for he despised him in his heart: But the more he carried himself, as if there were no God, the more were the being and perfections of God made manifest; for the more he hardened his heart—the more stout and stubborn he was, the more God honored himself in subduing him: Yea, God, in his infinite wisdom, suffered him to be as high and haughty—as stout and stubborn as he pleased; he took off all restraints from

him—permitted the *magicians* to imitate the miracles of *Moses*, so that *Pharaoh*, in seeing, might not see, nor be convinced; and he ordered that the plagues should last but for a short season, that *Pharaoh* might have respite; and thus it was that God hardened his heart: And God, in his infinite wisdom, did all this with a view to his own glory; as he tells *Pharaoh* by the hand of Moses—"Such and such plagues I design to bring upon you, and to do so, and so, with you." *And, indeed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth*...Exod. ix. 16: And, accordingly, God was illustriously honored, at last, upon *Pharaoh*, and upon all his host, at the Red Sea; and the *Egyptians*, and all the neighboring nations, were made to know that he was the LORD; and his name became dreadful among the heathen: And we find that, in three or four hundred years after, the *Philistines* had not forgotten it; for, when the *ark*, in the days of *Eli*, was carried into the camp of *Israel*, the *Philistines* were sore afraid, and said, "God is come into the camp: Woe unto us: Who shall deliver us out of the hands of these mighty Gods? These are the Gods that smote the *Egyptians* with all the plagues in the wilderness," &c....I *Sam.* iv.

So God wisely ordered and over-ruled all things, that befel the children of Israel in the wilderness, to accomplish the ends he had in view: His designs were to get himself a great name, and fill the whole earth with his glory (*Num.* xiv. 21.); and to try and humble his people, and make them know, that it was not for their righteousness that he brought them into the land of *Canaan*, (*Deut.* ix.) And every thing that came to pass, for those forty years, was admirably calculated to attain these ends. The news of *Pharaoh*'s overthrow—of God's coming down upon Mount Sinai, in the presence of all Israel, and abiding there so long a time, with such awful majesty; and of the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night—of the manna—of the water flowing out of a rock, and following them—of their murmurings and insurrections, and God's judgments upon them;—I say, the news of these, and other things of this nature, that

happened to them for those forty years, flew all the world over, and filled all the nations of the earth with the greatest astonishment; and made them think there was no God like the *God of Israel*...(Numb. xiv. 13, 14, 15.) By all these things, and by God's bringing his people, at last, to the possession of the land of *Canaan*, according to his promise, there was exhibited a specimen of God's infinite knowledge, power, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness and truth; and that before the eyes of all the nations: And so the whole earth was filled with his glory; i. e. with the clear manifestations of those perfections in which his glory consists. And thus his great end was obtained: And, in the mean time, all the wanderings, and trials, and sins, and sorrows of the children of *Israel*, together with all the wonderful works which their eyes beheld, and wherein God discovered himself for those forty years, had a natural tendency to try them, to humble them, and break their hearts; and make them know, that, not for their righteousness, nor for the uprightness of their hearts, did God, at last, shew them that great mercy: and to convince them of the exceeding great obligations they were under to love, and fear, and serve the Lord forever. And so, the other great end which God had in view was accomplished....*Deut.* viii. ix. & x. *chap.*—And now, all these things were by God wisely done; and in this his conduct, his infinite wisdom is to be seen.*—And thus it is in all God's dispensations, throughout all his dominions, with regard to the whole universe in general, and to every intelligent creature in particular. His

* If God had so ordered that *Abraham* had been born in the land of *Canaan*, and his posterity had multiplied greatly, and the other nations, gradually, by sicknesses and wars, had wasted away and come to nothing, until there were none but the posterity of *Abraham* left, and they had filled the land, God's hand then would not have been seen....none of these excellent ends attained....all would have been resolved into natural causes. Therefore God contrived where Abraham should be born—how he should leave his own country—have a promise of the land of *Canaan*; and how his seed should come to be in *Egypt*—come to be in great bondage and distress; how he would send, and now he would deliver them, and how they should carry themselves, and what should happen; and how every thing should turn out at last: he laid the whole plan, with a view to those excellent ends his eye was upon. It was wisely contrived, and, when it came to be acted over, his infinite wisdom was discovered.

works are all done in wisdom ; and so his infinite wisdom is discovered in all : And hence God appears infinitely glorious in the eyes of his people....*Deut.* xxxii. 3, 4.—*Psal.* civ. 24, & cv. 1, 45.—I *Cor.* i. 24, 31.

(4.) Again, *His infinite purity and holiness* is also discovered in his government of the world—in all that he has done to establish *right*, and discountenance *wrong*, throughout all his dominions. His creating angels and men in his own image, with his law written on their hearts, manifested his disposition, and showed what he was pleased with : But his public conduct, as moral Governor of the world, has more evidently discovered the very temper of his heart ; and shewn how he loves *right* and hates *wrong*, to an infinite degree. Governors, among men, discover much of their disposition, and show what they love and what they hate, by their laws ; and they show how fervent their love and hatred is, by all the methods they take to enforce them ; and so does the great Governor of the world : By his laws—by his promises and threatenings—by his past conduct, and declared designs for the future, he manifests how he loves moral good and hates moral evil.

By his infinite understanding, he is perfectly acquainted with himself, and with all his intelligent creatures ; and so perfectly knows what conduct in him towards them is right, fit and amiable, and such as becomes such a one as he is ; and also, perfectly knows what conduct in his creatures towards him, and towards each other, is fit and amiable, and so their duty. He sees what is right, and infinitely loves it, because it is right : He sees what is wrong, and infinitely hates it, because it is wrong ; and, in his whole conduct, as Governor of the world, he appears to be just what he is at heart—an infinite friend to right, and an infinite enemy to wrong.

He takes *state*....sets up himself as a GOD....bids all the world adore him, love and obey him, with all their hearts—and that upon pain of eternal damnation, in case of the least defect ; and promises eternal life and glory, in case of perfect obedience. This is the language of his law, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy*

God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself: Do this, and live; disobey, and die. And now *all* that infinite esteem for himself, and infinite regard for his own honor, which he herein manifests, does not result from a proud or a selfish spirit; for there is no such thing in his nature: Nor does he threaten damnation for sin, because it hurts him; or promise eternal life to obedience, because it does him any good: for he is infinitely above us, and absolutely independent of us, and cannot receive advantage or disadvantge from us....*Job* xxii. 2, 3. and xxxv. 6, 7. But it results from the infinite holiness of his nature. He loves and honors himself as he does, because, since he is what he is, it is right and fit he should: He bids the world adore, love and obey him with all their hearts, because, considering what he is, and what they are, it is infinitely fit and right: He commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves, because this also, in the nature of things, is right: And while he promises eternal life to the obedient, and threatens eternal damnation to the disobedient, he shows how infinitely he loves righteousness and hates iniquity. His promising eternal life and glory to perfect obedience, does indeed manifest the infinite goodness and bountifulness of his nature; but then his promising *all*, under the notion of a *reward*, discovers this temper of his heart ....*his infinite love to right.*

As to all his positive injunctions, they are evidently designed to promote a conformity to the moral law. And as to the moral law, it is originally founded upon the very reason and nature of things. The duties required therein are required, originally, because they are right in themselves: And the sins forbidden, are forbidden, originally, because they are unfit and wrong in themselves. The intrinsic fitness of the things required, and the intrinsic unfitness of the things forbidden, was the original ground, reason and foundation of his law. Thus, he bids all the world love him with all their hearts, because he is the Lord their God; and love one another as brethren, because they are all children of the same common father, having the same nature. He requires this supreme love to himself, and this mutual love

among his subjects, because it is right that so it should be; and because he perfectly loves that the thing that is right should be done....and not from any advantage that can possibly accrue unto him from the behavior of his creatures. And he forbids the contrary, because it is wrong, and therefore infinitely hateful in his sight....and not because it could be any disadvantage to him.—All the glory and blessedness which he bestows upon the angels in heaven, under the notion of a *reward* to their *obedience*, is not because their obedience does him any good; for it does not: nor because they deserve any thing from his hands; for they do not: (*Rom.* xi. 35, 36.) but merely because it is *right* that they should, in all things, obey him: This is what he loves, and what he delights to honor: And all the infinite, eternal glories of heaven can but just serve as a sufficient testimony of his approbation.—So, on the other hand, it was not in a passion, or from sudden, rash revenge, (which many times influences sinful men to cruel and barbarous deeds), that he turned those that sinned down to hell; and, for their first offence, doomed them to everlasting woe, without the least hope; for there is no such thing in his nature. As he is not capable of being injured, as we are, so neither is he capable of such anger as we feel. No: the thing they did was in itself infinitely wrong, and that was the true and only cause of his infinite displeasure; which infinite displeasure he meant to declare and make known in the sight of all worlds, throughout the endless ages of eternity, by rendering to them according to their deserts: For he loves to appear as great an enemy to sin, in his conduct, as he is in his heart. He loves to act out his heart, and exhibit a true image of himself. His infinite love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity, is also displayed in his promising eternal life and blessedness to *Adam* and to all his race, a whole world of beings, as a *reward* to the obedience of *Adam*—by him constituted public head and representative, on the one hand; and threatening eternal destruction to him and all his race, a whole world of beings, in case of the least transgression, on the other hand. But his infinite love to righteousness, and hatred of iniquity, is manifest-

ed in the greatest perfection, in the death of Jesus Christ, his only begotten son: But of this more afterwards.—In a word, all the blessings which he has granted to the godly in this world, as rewards of their virtue....to *Abel*, *Enoch*, and *Noah*....to *Lot*.... to *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, &c. and all the judgments which he has executed upon the wicked....his turning *Adam* out of paradise....drowning the old world....burning *Sodom*, &c. together with all the evils which befel the children of *Israel*, in the wilderness—in the time of the judges—in the reigns of their kings ....and their long captivity in *Babylon*, &c. have all been public testimonies that the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity.—And, in heaven and in hell, he designs to display, to all eternity, in the most glorious and dreadful manner, how infinitely he loves righteousness and hates iniquity.

Now when true believers, who are divinely enlightened, meditate on and view the laws, the conduct, and the declared designs of the great Governor of the world, they love, admire and adore, and say, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, the whole world is full of thy glory.* This divine disposition, to love righteousness and hate iniquity, which the great Governor of the world thus discovers in all his government, appears infinitely beautiful and glorious, excellent, and amiable in their eyes: Whence they are ready to say, *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness*, &c....As they do in *Exod.* xv. 11.*

* If we should suppose (as some do), that there is nothing *right* or *wrong* antecedent to a consideration of the *positive will* and *law* of God, the great governor of the world; and that *right* and *wrong* result, originally, from his *sovereign will* and *absolute authority* entirely, then these absurdities would unavoidably follow:

1. *That the moral perfections of God are empty names, without any signification at all.* For if there be no intrinsic moral fitness and unfitness in things, no right nor wrong, then there is no such thing as *moral beauty* or *moral deformity*; and so, no foundation, in the nature of things, for any *moral propensity*; i. e. there is nothing for God to love or hate, considered as a *moral agent*. There can be no inclination or disposition in him to love right and hate wrong, if there be no such thing as right or wrong. So that the only idea we could frame of God, would be that of an almighty, despotic sovereign, who makes his own will his only rule, without any regard to right or wrong, good or evil, just or unjust....an idea of the infinitely glorious and ever-blessed God, evidently as contrary to truth as can be devised.

2. *That,*

(5.) *His impartial justice* is also discovered in his moral government of the world. He appears, in his public conduct, as one infinitely engaged to give to every one his due, and as one absolutely governed by a spirit of the most perfectly disinterested impartiality: He appears as one infinitely engaged to maintain the rights of the Godhead, and to secure that glory to the divine Being that is his proper due; and that by the law which he has established, in heaven and on earth, binding all to love, worship and obey him, as GOD, upon pain of eternal damnation: And so, again, he appears as one infinitely engaged to secure all his subjects here upon earth in a quiet and peaceable possession of their own proper rights; and that by strictly enjoin-

2. *That, in the nature of things, there is no more reason to love and obey God, than there is to hate and disobey him:* there being, in the nature of things, no right nor wrong. Just as if God was not infinitely worthy of our highest esteem and most perfect obedience! and just as if, in the nature of things, there was no reason why we should love and obey him, but merely because he is the greatest and strongest, and says we *must!* than which nothing can be more evidently absurd. But if these things are so, then it will follow,

3. *That there is no reason why he should require his creatures to love and obey him, or forbid the contrary; or why he should reward the one, or punish the other:* there being, in the nature of things, no right nor wrong: and so the foundation of God's law and government is overturned, and all religion torn up by the roots; and nothing is left but arbitrary tyranny and servile subjection....all expressly contrary to *Gen.* xviii. 25—*Heb.* i. 9—*Eph.* vi. 1—*Rom.* xii. 1—*Rev.* iv. 11—*Rom.* vii. 12—*Rom.* ii. 4, 5, 6—*Rev.* xix. 1, 6—*Ezek.* xviii. 25.

Or again, if we should suppose (as others do), that there is nothing *right* or *wrong*, antecedent to a consideration of the general good of the whole system of intelligent created beings; and that *right* and *wrong* result, originally and entirely, from the natural tendency of things to promote, or hinder the general good of the whole: then, also, these manifest absurdities will unavoidably follow:

1. *That the moral perfections of God entirely consist in, or result from a disposition to love his creatures supremely, and seek their happiness as his only end:* just as if it became the most high to make a God of his creatures, and himself their servant! expressly contrary to *Rom.* xi. 36—*Numb.* xiv—*Rev.* iv. 11.

2. *That God loves virtue and rewards it, merely because it tends to make his creatures happy; and hates vice and punishes it, merely because it tends to make his creatures miserable:* just as if he had no regard to the rights of the Godhead, nor cared how much contempt was cast upon the glorious majesty of Heaven! expressly contrary to *Exod.* xxxii.—*Numb.* xiv.—I *Sam.* ii. 29, 30—II *Sam.* xii. 10, 14—*Psalm* li. 4.

3. *That he requires us to love and obey him, merely because it tends to make us happy, and forbids the contrary merely because it tends to make us miserable:* just as if he had no sense of the infinite glory and excellency of his nature, and our infinite obligations to love and obey him thence arising! and just as if he thought it no crime in us, to treat him with the greatest contempt!

and

ing every one to love his neighbor as himself, and always do as he would be done by, and that upon pain of eternal damnation....*Gal.* iii. 10.—*Deut.* xxvii. 26. And he appears as one governed by a spirit of the most perfectly disinterested impartiality, in that he spared not the angels that sinned, who were some of the noblest of all his creatures; and in that he is determined not to spare impenitent sinners at the day of judgment, though they cry ever so earnestly for mercy; but, above all, in that he spared not his only begotten SON, when he stood in the room of sinners. If ever any poor, guilty wretch, round the world, feels tempted to think that God is cruel for damning sinners, and does not do as he would be done by, if he was in their case, and they in his, let him come away to the cross of Christ, and

and just as if nothing could raise his resentment but merely the injury done to ourselves! expressly contrary to *Numb.* xiv.—II *Sam.* xii. 10, 14, &c.

4. *That we are under no obligations to love God, but merely because it tends to make us happy; and that it is no crime to hate and blaspheme God, but merely because it tends to make us miserable.* But if so, then the misery which naturally results from hating and blaspheming God, is exactly equal to the crime; and therefore no positive inflicted punishment is deserved in this world, or in that which is to come. And, therefore, all the punishments which God inflicts upon sinners in this world, and forever in Hell, are entirely undeserved: and so his law and government, instead of being holy, just and good, are infinitely unreasonable, tyrannical and cruel.—To say, that God punishes some of his sinful creatures, merely to keep others in awe, whenas they do not, in the least, deserve any punishment, is to suppose the great Governor of the world to do evil, that good may come; and yet, at the same time, to take the most direct course to render himself odious throughout all his dominions. It is impossible to account for the punishments which God has inflicted upon sinners in this world, and designs to inflict upon them forever in hell, without supposing that there is an infinite evil in sin, over and above what results from its natural tendency to make us miserable: and that, therefore, we are under infinite obligations to love and obey God, antecedent to any consideration of its tendency to make us happy.

From all which, it is evident, to demonstration, that right and wrong do neither result from the mere will and law of God, nor from any tendency of things to promote or hinder the happiness of God's creatures. It remains, therefore, that there is an intrinsic moral fitness and unfitness, absolutely in things themselves: as that we should love the infinitely glorious God, is, in the nature of things, infinitely fit and right; and to hate and blaspheme him, is, in the nature of things, infinitely unfit and wrong: and that, antecedent to any consideration of advantage or disadvantage, reward or punishment, or even of the will or law of God. And hence it is, that God infinitely loves right, and hates wrong, and appears so infinitely engaged to reward the one, and punish the other. And hence, his law and government are holy, just and good....they are glorious; and in and by them the infinite glory of the divine nature shines forth....*Isa.* vi. 3.—*Rev.* iv. 8—*Rev.* xix. 1—6.

see God's own Son, his second self, there nailed up, naked, bleeding, groaning, dying, in the greatest possible contempt, ignominy and shame, before ten thousand insulting, blood-thirsty spectators; and let him know that this Jesus is GOD—a person of infinitely greater dignity and worth than all creatures in heaven and earth put together, and infinitely dear to the great Governor of the world, even just as dear as his own self, and upon whom he would not lay these sufferings any sooner than upon himself;—I say, let him stand, and look, and gaze, and learn that God does exactly as he would be done by, when he damns sinners to all eternity, were he in their case, and they in his (if I may so say, when speaking of the most high God), since that for his own Son, a person of infinite dignity, to suffer all these things, is equivalent to the eternal torments of finite creatures: Indeed, it was not because he was not a Being of infinite goodness, that he treated his own Son so; nor is it because he has no regard to his creatures' happiness, that he designs to damn the finally impenitent; but it is merely because sin is an infinite evil, and, according to strict justice, worthy of an infinite punishment: It is right and fit that he should do as he does, and therefore his conduct will forever appear infinitely glorious and beautiful in the eyes of all holy beings. Psalm xcvi. 11, 12, 13 ....*Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.* See also *Rev.* xix. 1—6.

(6.) *His infinite goodness* is also discovered in his government of the world; for all the laws of this great and good Governor are suited in their own nature to advance all his subjects to the highest perfection they are capable of. His law teaches us to view all things just as they are, and to have our will and affections entirely governed by the truth—by the very reason and nature of things: And so to be according to the measure of such finite creatures, in our wills and in the temper of our minds, after

the image of the blessed and glorious God, which is the highest dignity and perfection we are possibly capable of. When God commands us to be holy as he is holy, he enjoins that as our duty which at the same time is our highest possible privilege. He bids us be like the angels, and begin our heaven upon earth; yea, even to participate of a glory and blessedness of the same nature with that which he himself enjoys: To behold his glory....to be ravished with his beauty....to esteem him supremely, live to him entirely, and delight in him superlatively, and to become like him in our views of things, and in the temper of our minds, is our highest dignity, glory, and excellency, and our highest blessedness: And, besides, his laws are still further calculated to promote the welfare of his subjects, in that they are suited to establish universal love, peace and harmony, throughout all his dominions. *Love thy neighbor as thyself*, is one of the fundamental laws of his kingdom: And were his authority duly regarded, and his laws obeyed, love, and peace and harmony, with all their happy and blessed effects, would reign through all the earth, as they do in heaven; and paradise would not be confined to Eden, nor to heaven, but be all over the world.

And the wrath of this good Governor is only revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, which are the ruin and debasement of our nature, and the destruction of our peace and happiness. He threatens damnation to his subjects, to keep them from destroying themselves, as well as to deter them from affronting his Majesty. All the dreadful threatenings of his law result not only from his holiness and justice, but also from the infinite goodness of his nature; in that hereby his subjects are mercifully forwarned of the evil and bitter consequences of sin, to the end they may avoid it. He is a perfect enemy to hatred and revenge—to cruelty and injustice: He cannot bear to see the widow or fatherless oppressed, or the poor despised, or the miserable insulted, or any evil thing done among his subjects: And therefore this good Governor has threatened tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath, against every soul that doth evil; and, with all his authority,

has commanded his subjects, through all this world, upon pain of eternal damnation, to do as they would be done by.

And then, still further to engage his subjects to that in which their greatest glory and blessedness consists, he, in his law, promises eternal life to the obedient: wherein the infinite bountifulness of his nature, as well as his unspeakable concern for his creatures' welfare is discovered.

And if we survey his conduct towards mankind, from the beginning, we may, in ten thousand instances, see the infinite goodness of his nature displayed. If we consider what his ways have been towards an apostate world—how he has given his Son to be a Redeemer, and his spirit to be a sanctifier—how he has sent all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending; and that notwithstanding he knew beforehand what treatment he would meet with from a guilty, ungrateful, God-hating world—how they would murder his Son, resist his spirit, and kill his messengers: if we consider how patient, and forbearing, and long-suffering he has been towards obstinate sinners—how loth to give them over; swearing by himself that he delights not in their death, but rather that they turn and live; even while they have contemned and affronted him in the vilest manner: and if we consider his distinguishing favors towards his elect, and the marvellous things which he has wrought for his church and people;—I say, if we consider these things, and, at the same time, look round the world and behold the innumerable common favors strewed abroad among guilty, hell-deserving rebels, we must be forced to own, that he is good to all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works.

His goodness, indeed, is evidently as unbounded as his power. There is no act of kindness, which his omnipotency is able to do, but that there is goodness enough in his heart to prompt him to do it, if, all things considered, it is best to be done: His propensity to do good is fully equal to his ability. All the treasures and good things of this lower world are his, and he gives all to the children of men; and we should have enjoyed all, without the least sorrow intermixed, had not our sin and apostacy made

it necessary for him to give some testimony of his displeasure: and yet, even the calamities of life are well adapted, in our present state, to do us good. All the treasures and glories of heaven are his, and he offers all to a guilty world, and actually gives all to such as are willing to accept of all, through the mediator, in the way prescribed—and what can he give more? Can he give his only begotten son to die for sinners? Behold, he has a heart to do it! Can he give his holy spirit to recover poor sinners to God? Behold, he has a heart to do it....is as ready to give his holy spirit to them that ask, as parents are to give bread to their children! And, finally, can he, in any sense, give himself to his creatures? Behold, he is willing to do so....to be their God, and father, and portion, and be all things to them, and do all things for them, if they will but accept of him through Jesus Christ! So that, as I said, his propensity to do good is fully equal to his ability: And there is no doubt but that he does show all those kindnesses to his intelligent creatures, which, all things considered, are best should be shown. And his understanding is infinite, whereby he is able to determine exactly what is best in the whole. *Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds: How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings*....Psalm xxxvi. 5, 7.

And such is the goodness of his nature, and so much goodness has he in his heart, that he needs no motive to excite him to do good; *i. e.* nothing from without: Thus, unmoved and unexcited by any thing from without himself, of his own mere goodness, he did, in the days of eternity, determine to do all that good, which ever will by him be done, to all eternity, when there was nothing existing but himself, and so nothing to move him but his own good pleasure: Yea, such is the goodness of his nature, that he not only needs no motive from without to excite him to do good, but even then, when there are all things to the contrary—even every thing in his creatures to render them ill-deserving, and to discourage and hinder his shewing mercy,

and to provoke him to wrath—even then, when discouragements are infinitely great, and provocations are innumerable; yea, when there is nothing in his creature but what is of the nature of a provocation—even, in such a case, he can show mercy; yea, the greatest of mercies. He can give his son to die for such, and his holy spirit to sanctify them, and himself at last to be their God and father, and everlasting portion: Such is the incomparable goodness of his nature. *Who is a God like unto thee!* &c....*Mic.* vii. 18, 19.—But then he is at liberty, in such cases, and may act according to his own discretion, and have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and have compassion on whom he will have compassion; and, truly, it is infinitely fit he should. To act sovereignly, in such cases, is infinitely becoming; and, indeed, it is fit he should dispense all his favors according to his sovereign pleasure: It is fit he should do what he will with his own. He knows best how to exercise his own goodness, and it is perfectly fit that he should be at liberty, and act according to his own discretion....according to the counsel of his own will. And because it is infinitely fit, therefore he actually does so....*Eph.* i. 11. He passed by the angels that sinned, and pitied sinful men; he passed by the rest of the world, and chose the seed of Abraham; he suffers thousands of sinners to go on in their sins and perish, and, in the mean time, seizes here and there one by his all-conquering grace, and effectually saves them; and all according to his sovereign pleasure, because it seems good in his sight so to do. And the reason why he acts sovereignly, is because, in the nature of things, it is fit he should; therefore, his sovereignty is a holy and a glorious sovereignty. Hence, when Moses desired to see *his glory*, he discovered *this* unto him....*Exod.* xxxiii. 12. And because our Savior saw how fit and becoming it was for God to act as a sovereign, in bestowing his favors, therefore he saw a glory in his sovereignty, and so rejoiced in it....*Mat.* xi. 25, 26. And sovereign grace is glorious grace in the eyes of every one who views things aright, and has a right frame of heart. Considering that *all* God has is *his own*....that he knows infinitely the

best what to do *with what he has*....that there can be *no motive from without* to excite him to act, it is infinitely fit he should be left to himself, to act according to his own discretion ; and it is infinite impudence for a worm of the dust to intermeddle or go about to direct the almighty and infinitely wise God ; and it is infinite wickedness to dislike his conduct, and find fault with his dispensations.

Indeed, if there was nothing of greater worth and importance than the happiness of his creatures and subjects, and so nothing that he ought to have a greater regard to and concern for, then it is not to be supposed that any of his creatures and subjects would be finally miserable. The infinitely good Governor of the world has a great regard to the happiness of his subjects : their welfare is very dear to him, and their misery, in itself, or for its own sake, very undesirable in his sight ; yet he has so much greater regard to something else, that, in some instances, he actually does suffer sinners to go on in their sins and perish forever : yea, he will inflict the eternal torments of hell upon them. The goodness of God is a holy, wise and rational goodness, and not an unreasonable fondness : He will never do a wrong thing, to oblige any of his creatures : no, he had rather the whole world should be damned ; yea, that even his own Son should die : Nor will he ever communicate good to any one, when, all things considered, it is not best and wisest. When he first designed to create the world, and first laid out his whole scheme of government, as it was easy for him to have determined, that neither angels nor men should ever sin, and that misery should never be heard of in all his dominions, so he could easily have prevented both sin and misery. Why did he not ?—Surely, not for want of goodness in his nature ; for that is infinite :—not from any thing like cruelty ; for there is no such thing in him :—not for want of a suitable regard to the happiness of his creatures ; for that he always has : But it was because, in his infinite wisdom, he did not think it best in the whole. It was not because he had not sufficient power to preserve angels and men all holy and happy ; for it is certain he had :—it was not be-

cause preventing grace would have been inconsistent with their being free agents; for it would not:—it was not because he did not thoroughly consider and weigh the thing with all its consequences; for it is certain he did: But, upon the whole, all things considered, he judged it best to permit the angels to sin and man to fall; and so let misery enter into his dominions. It did not come to pass accidentally and unawares, and contrary to what God had ever thought of or intended; because it is certain that he knew all things from the beginning; and it is certain that, in an affair of such a nature, and of such consequence, he could not stand by as an idle, unconcerned spectator, that cares not which way things go. There is no doubt, therefore, but that, all things considered, he thought it best to permit things to come to pass just as they did: And, if he thought it best, it was best; for his understanding is infinite—his wisdom unerring, and so he can never be mistaken. But why was it best? What could he have in view preferable to the happiness of his creatures? And if their happiness was to him above all things most dear, how could he bear the thoughts of their ever, any of them, being miserable?—Why, it is certain he thought it best; and therefore it is certain he had a view to something else besides merely the happiness of his creatures—to something of greater importance, and more worthy to bear a governing sway in his mind, by which it became him to be above all things influenced, in laying out and contriving how things should proceed and be disposed in the world he designed to create.

But what was that thing which was of greater worth and importance, and so more worthy to bear a governing sway in his mind, and to which he had the greatest regard, making all other things give way to this? What was his *grand end* in creating and governing the world? Why, look....what end he is at last like to obtain, when the whole scheme is finished, and the day of judgment past, and heaven and hell filled with all their proper inhabitants: And what will be the final result? What will he get by all? Why, in all, he will exert and display every one of his perfections to the life, and so, by all, will exhibit a most

perfect and exact image of himself. And now, as he is infinitely glorious in being what he is, therefore that scheme of conduct which is perfectly suited to exhibit the most lively and exact image of him, must be infinitely glorious too: And, therefore, this is the greatest and best thing he can aim at in all his works; and this, therefore, ought to be his *last end.* Now, it is evident that the fall of the angels and of man, together with all those things which have and will come to pass in consequence thereof, and occasioned thereby, from the beginning of the world to the day of judgment, and throughout eternity, will serve to give a much more lively and perfect representation of God, than could possibly have been exhibited, had there never been any sin or misery. The holiness and justice—the goodness, mercy, and grace of God shine much more brightly: They have been displayed with an astonishing lustre and glory in the death of Christ, and will be displayed forever in heaven and in hell, as they could not have been, had not sin and misery ever been permitted to enter into God's world: Indeed, if, in the nature of things, it had been wrong for God to have permitted any of his creatures to sin, and then to punish them for it—if God had been bound in duty, or in goodness, to keep them from sin, or to save them when they had sinned, then the case had been otherwise: But since, in the nature of things, it was fit he should be at liberty, and act according to his own discretion; and since the end he had in view was so noble and godlike, his conduct in this affair was infinitely right, fit and becoming, and so infinitely glorious. Certainly God thought it was so, or he would not have done as he did; and therefore, if we view things as God did, and have a temper and frame of heart like unto his, we shall think so too: And, as I said before, it is horrid pride and impudence for us to pretend to know better than the infinitely wise God, and infinite wickedness for us to pretend to find fault with his conduct....*Rom.* ix. 19—23.* Thus, if he had

* Obj....But surely it could not be consistent with the divine goodness, from all eternity, to decree the everlasting misery of his creatures.

Ans.

aimed merely at the happiness of his creatures, he could easily have so ordered that Pharaoh should willingly have let Israel go, and he could have led Israel in less than forty days to the promised land, and put them into an immediate possession: but there was something else which he had a greater regard to; and therefore Pharaoh's heart is hardened, and all his wonders are wrought in the land of Egypt. The tribes of Israel march to the borders of the Red-Sea....the sea parts....Israel goes through, but the Egyptians are drowned. And now Israel is tempted and tried, and they sin and rebel, and so are doomed to wander forty years in the wilderness, and to have their carcases fall there. And why was all this? Why, because his design was to display all his perfections, and fill the whole earth with his glory...*Exod.* ix. 16—*Numb.* xiv. 21. And now, because it is the most noble thing that God can have in view, to act forth all his perfections to the life, and so exhibit the most exact representation of himself in his works; therefore, it is infinitely fit he should make this his last end, and all other things subservient; and his conduct in so doing is infinitely beautiful and glorious. Thus we see how the goodness of God is displayed in his government of the world, and see that it is an unbounded, rich, free goodness; and that all the exercises of it are sovereign, and under the direction of his infinite wisdom: so that God is infinitely glorious on the account of this perfection of his nature....*Exod.* xxxiii. 19. & xxxiv. 5, 6, 7.—*Rom.* ix—*Eph.* i. 1—12.

(7) *His unchangeable truth and faithfulness* are also discovered in his government of the world; and that in the fulfilment of his promises, and the execution of his threatenings. Did he

Ans....God has in fact permitted sin to enter into the world—does in fact permit many to die in their sins—will in fact punish them forever; and *all* consistent with the infinite goodness of his nature, as every one must acknowledge. And since it is consistent with his goodness to *do as he does*, it was consistent with his goodness, to determine with himself beforehand to *do so*:...What God, *from eternity*, decreed to do, that God, *in time*, will do: therefore, if *all* God's *conduct* be holy, just and good, so also are *all* his *decrees*; unless we can suppose it to be wrong for the infinitely wise God, from all eternity, to determine upon a conduct in all respects *right*: than which nothing can be more absurd.

promise to be Abraham's God? So he was. Did he promise to give the land of Canaan to his seed for an inheritance? So he did. Did he promise to send his Son into the world, and to set him up a kingdom upon earth? Even so he has done: And he is in like manner true and faithful to all his promises, which he has made to his people. And did he threaten to drown the old world....to make Israel wander forty years in the wilderness....to deliver them into the hands of their enemies, at what time soever they should forsake him, and go and serve other gods, and, finally, to send them captives into Babylon for seventy years? Even so he has done. God's word may always be depended upon; for what he designs, that he says; and what he says, that he will do. And this is another of the glorious perfections of his nature.

Thus all the perfections of God are discovered in his government of the world. By his *conduct* we may see what he is, and learn the very temper of his heart. And now, I might go through his other works....his redeeming, justifying, sanctifying sinners, and bringing them to eternal glory at last, and shew how his glorious perfections shine forth in them. But I have already hinted at some of these things, and shall have occasion afterwards to view the divine perfections shining forth in these works of God, when I come to consider the nature of the gospel. Sufficient has been said to answer my present purpose; and, therefore, for brevity's sake, I will proceed no further here. Thus, then, we see how the perfections of God are manifested in his *works*.

Secondly. *The same representation is made of God in his* WORD: For these great works of God....his creating, preserving and governing the world....his redeeming, sanctifying and saving sinners, are the subject-matter of all the Bible. God, in his works, acts out his perfections, and, in his word, lays the whole before our eyes in writing. Therein he has told us what he has done, and what he intends to do; and so has delineated his glorious perfections in the plainest manner. In his *word*, God has *revealed himself* to the children of men...has manifest-

ed and shewn what he *is*. But how? Why, by declaring and holding forth his works, as that in which he has exhibited the image of himself. Thus, the scriptures begin with an account of God's creating the world, and goes on throughout all the Old Testament, informing how he preserves and governs it: And, then, in the New Testament, we are informed more particularly how he redeems, justifies, sanctifies, and saves sinners. And now, as the actions of a man discover the temper and disposition of his heart, and shew what he is, so the works of God, from first to last, all taken together, hold forth an exact representation of himself. If we will begin with God's creating the world, and survey all his conduct in the light of scripture....his conduct towards man before the fall, and after the fall....his conduct towards Abel and Cain, Enoch and Noah, and all the old world....his conduct towards Lot and Sodom—towards Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Joseph—towards the children of Israel, in Egypt, at the Red-Sea, in the wilderness, at Sinai, at Massah, at Taberah, &c....and in the times of Joshua, of their Judges, of their Kings, &c. and then come into the New Testament, and survey his conduct with relation to the redemption and salvation of sinners, and then look forward to the great judgment-day, and see his whole scheme finished....see the result, the conclusion and end of all; look up to heaven and take a view of that world, and look down to hell and survey the state of things there; from the whole we may see *what God is:* for, in the whole, God exerts his nature, and, by the whole, God designs to exhibit an exact representation of *himself*. And, then, are our apprehensions of God *right*, and according to *truth*, when we take in that very representation which he has made of himself: And now to account him infinitely glorious in being what he is, and to *love him with all our hearts*, because he is what he is, is the very thing which the law of God requires.

And, indeed, so plain is that representation which God has made of himself, by his works and in his word; and he is *really* so infinitely glorious in being what he is, that were not mankind, through their exceeding great depravity, entirely void of a right

taste and *relish* for *true beauty*, they could not but be even ravished with the divine Being. They would naturally feel as they do in heaven, and naturally speak their language, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!* ....*Isai.* vi. 3. But such is the vile temper of sinful, apostate creatures, that they are not only blind to the moral excellency of the divine nature, but are even in a stated, habitual contrariety to God in the frame of their hearts....*Rom.* viii. 7. And hence, the manifestation which God has made of himself, can find no place in their hearts....*John* viii. 37. They cannot attend to things of such a nature, *(verse* 43.*)* because so disagreeable to their taste; for *(verse* 47.*)* *He that is of God, heareth God's word; ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God.* It is hard to bring unregenerate men so much as to have right notions of what God is, because he is a Being in his nature so contrary and disagreeable to them. They do not *like to retain God in their knowledge*....*Rom.* i. 28. Men had rather that God was another kind of Being, different from what he really is, and more like themselves—one that would suit their temper, and serve their interest: and, therefore, they frame such an one in their own fancy, and then fall down and worship the false image which they have set up. From hence it is, that all those false notions of God have taken their rise, which have always filled the world. But were men brought to have right notions of what God is, and to take in that ve. representation which he has made of himself, by his works and in his word; yet they would be so far from accounting him infinitely glorious in being what he is, that they would see *no form or comeliness in him wherefore they should desire him:* but would feel the like malignant spirit towards him as the Jews did towards their prophets, and towards Christ and his apostles, only in a worse degree. The same temper which caused the exercise of such enmity towards their prophets, and towards Christ and his apostles, would have caused as great or greater towards God himself, had they but had right notions of him. And the clearer apprehension a sinner has of God, the more will his enmity ex-

ert itself; because a sinful nature and a holy nature are diametrically opposite to each other: And, therefore, the clearest external revelation of God cannot bring sinners to love him.—All the world will see just what kind of Being he is at the day of judgment, and that in a very plain and clear manner: But yet they whose nature it is to hate him for being what he is, will hate him still; yea, hate him more than ever: And, therefore, besides the external revelation which God has made of himself, by his works and in his word, there is an absolute necessity that he should internally reveal himself in his glory to the heart of a sinner, in order to beget divine love there: Which brings me to add,

Thirdly. *God reveals his infinite glory in being what he is in the hearts of sinners, by his holy* SPIRIT....*Mat.* xi. 25, 27. By his works and in his word he has revealed *what he is*, and that in a manner sufficiently plain—even so plainly that there is no need at all of any further objective revelation; and he is really *infinitely glorious* in being what he is: Now, therefore, if we would rightly attend to that revelation which God has made of himself, we could not but have right apprehensions of him; and if we had a good taste for true beauty, we could not but be ravished with his glory: but we are naturally disinclined to right apprehensions of God, and are entirely destitute of a true taste for moral beauty: And hence we may learn what kind of inward illumination we stand in need of from the spirit of God. We do not need the holy spirit to reveal any *new truths* concerning God, not already revealed; for the external revelation which he has made of himself, is *sufficiently full*:—we do not need to have the holy spirit immediately reveal all these truths concerning God *over again* to us, by way of *objective revelation*, or immediate inspiration; because the external revelation already made is *sufficiently plain*: We only need (1) to be effectually awakened, to attend to those manifestations which he has made of himself in his works and word, that we may *see what he is*: And (2) to have a spiritual taste imparted to us, by the immediate influence of the Holy Ghost, that we may have *a sense of*

his infinite glory in being such: For these two will lay an effectual foundation in our hearts for that *love* which the law requires. By the common influences of the spirit, we may be awakened to a realizing sight and sense of *what* GOD *is;* and, by the special and sanctifying influences of the spirit, we may receive a sense of his infinite *glory* in being such: And also the sense of his *glory* will naturally cause us to see more clearly what God *is:* for a sense of the moral excellency of the divine nature fixes our thoughts on God; and the more our thoughts are fixed, the more distinctly we see what he is: And while we see him to be what he is, and see his infinite glory in being such, hereby a divine love is naturally enkindled in our hearts. And thus, *He that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in our hearts, and gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God:* And so *we all, with open face, behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image*...II Cor. iii. 18. and iv. 6. A sight of the moral excellency of the divine nature makes God appear infinitely glorious in every respect. Those things in God, which before appeared exceeding dreadful, now appear unspeakably glorious: His sovereignty appears glorious, because now we see he is fit to be a sovereign, and that it is fit and right he should do what he will with his own: His justice appears glorious, because now we see the infinite evil of sin; and a consideration of his infinite understanding and almighty power enhances his glory: And while we view what he is, and see his greatness and glory, and consider his original, entire, underived right to all things, we begin to see why he assumes the character of most high God, supreme Lord, and sovereign Governor of the whole world; and we resign the throne to him, and take our places, and become his willing subjects; and our hearts are framed to love him, and fear him, and trust in him through Jesus Christ; and we give up ourselves to him, to walk in all his ways and keep all his commands, seeking his glory: And thus a sight and sense of the infinite dignity, greatness, glory and excellency of the most high God, lays the first foundation for a divine love. God's being what he is,

is the primary reason that he requires us to *love him with all our hearts;* and it is the first motive of a genuine love.

I might now pass on to consider the *additional obligations* we are under to love God; but that it may be profitable to stop a while, and a little consider the nature and properties of this *first and greatest* and *most fundamental obligation;* and take a view of some *important consequences* necessarily following therefrom. And here,

1. This obligation is binding *antecedently* to any consideration of *advantage* or *disadvantage*—of *rewards* or *punishments;* and even prior to any consideration of *the positive will and law of God himself.*

2. It is *infinitely* binding.

3. It is *eternally* binding.

4. It is *unchangeably* binding.

5. It is that from which all *other* obligations *originally derive* their binding nature.

1. This obligation which we are under, to *love God with all our hearts*, resulting from the infinite excellency of the divine nature, is binding *antecedently to any consideration of advantage or disadvantage—of rewards or punishments, or even of the positive will and law of God himself.* To love God with all our hearts naturally tends to make us happy; and the contrary to make us miserable; and there are glorious rewards promised on the one hand, and dreadful punishments threatened on the other; and God, as Governor of the world, has, with all his authority, by his law, expressly required us to love him with all our hearts, and forbidden the contrary; and all these things are binding; but yet the infinite excellency of the divine nature lays us under bonds *prior* to any consideration of these things: So that if our interest did not at all lie at stake, and if there had never been any express law in the case, yet it would be right, and our indispensable duty, to love God with all our hearts.—His being infinitely lovely in himself, makes it our duty to love him; for he is, in himself, worthy of our highest esteem: He deserves it; it is, in the nature of things, his due: and that an-

tecedent to any selfish consideration, or any express law in the case. To suppose the contrary, is to deny the infinite amiableness of the divine nature, and to take away the very foundation of the law itself, and the very reason of all rewards and punishments: For if our supreme love is not due to God, then he is not infinitely lovely; and if he does not deserve to be loved with all our hearts, why does he require it? And if, in the nature of things, it is not right and fit that we should love him, and, the contrary, unfit and wrong, what grounds are there for rewards or punishments? So that it is evident, the infinite excellency of the divine nature binds us, and makes it our duty, antecedent to any consideration of advantage or disadvantage, rewards or punishments, or even of the positive will and law of God, to love God with all our hearts; and therefore our love must primarily take its rise from a sense of this infinite excellency of the divine nature, as has been before observed; and that seeming love, which arises merely from selfish considerations, from the fear of punishment or hope of reward, or because the law requires it, and so it is a duty and must be done, is not genuine; but is a selfish, a mercenary, and a forced thing. How evidently, therefore, do those discover their hypocrisy, who are wont to talk after the following manner:—"If I am elected, I "shall be saved, let me do what I will; and if I am not elect-"ed, I shall be damned, let me do what I can: and therefore it "is no matter how I live." And again after this sort...."If I "knew certainly that God had made no promises to the duties "of the unregenerate, as some pretend, I would never do any "more in religion." Surely, they had as good say that they have no regard at all to the infinite excellency of the divine nature, but are entirely influenced by selfish and mercenary motives in all they do: They do not seem to understand that they are under infinite obligations to love God with all their hearts, and obey him in every thing, resulting from God's being what he is, and that antecedent to all selfish considerations;—such know not God....I. *John*, iii. 6.

2. This obligation, resulting from the intrinsic excellency and amiableness of the divine nature, is *infinitely binding;* because this excellency and amiableness is in itself infinite. Our obligation arises from his desert; but he infinitely deserves our love, because he is infinitely lovely. When any person is lovely and honorable, reason teaches us that we ought to love and honor him, and that it is wrong to dislike and despise him: And the more lovely and honorable, the greater is our obligation to love and honor him; and the more aggravatedly vile is it to treat him with contempt. Since, therefore, God is a Being of infinite dignity, greatness, glory and excellency, hence we are under an infinite obligation to love him with all our hearts; and it is infinitely wrong not to do so: Since he is infinitely worthy to be honored and obeyed by us, therefore we are under an infinite obligation to honor and obey him; and that with all our heart and soul, and mind and strength. Hence,

[1.] *Perfect love and perfect obedience deserve no thanks at his hands.* If we perfectly love him, even with all our hearts, and give up ourselves entirely and forever to him, to do his will and seek his glory, and so cordially delight in him as to take up our full and everlasting contentment in him; yet, in all this, we do but our duty, and we do no more than what we are under an infinite obligation to do; and, therefore, we deserve no thanks....*Luke* xvii. 9, 10.—Yea, we do nothing but that in which consists our highest perfection, glory, and blessedness; and, therefore, instead of deserving thanks, we ought to account it an exceeding great privilege that we *may* thus love the Lord, live to him, and live upon him....*Psalm* xix. 10.

When, therefore, eternal life was promised in the first covenant as the *reward* of perfect obedience, it was not under the notion of any thing being *merited;* nor did it ever enter into the hearts of the angels in heaven to imagine they merited any thing by all their love and service; for, from their very hearts, they all join to say, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and praise forever.* And they deserve no thanks for their doing so, for they but own the very truth.

When, therefore, sinful men, poor, hell-deserving creatures, think it MUCH that they should love and serve God so well, and take so great pains in religion ; and are ready to think that God and man ought highly to value them for their so doing, and are always telling God and man how MIGHTY good they are ; as he, *Luke* xviii. 11, 12....*God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican ;*— no, far from this, I am one of the best men in all the world—*I fast twice in the week....I give tythes of all that I possess.* This appeared to him such a MIGHTY thing, that he thought it quite worth while to tell God himself of it. Now, I say, when this is men's temper, it is a sign they neither know God, nor love him ; for, if they did, they could not set so *high* a price upon their duties, since he is so infinitely deserving : The plain truth is, such have intolerable mean thoughts of God, and intolerable high thoughts of themselves—they are brim-full of spiritual pride and self-righteousness ; and such are exceedingly hateful in the sight of God. They implicitly say that God is not infinitely glorious, and infinitely worthy of all love and honor—he does not deserve it...it is not his due ; but rather he is beholden to his creatures for it, and ought to render them many thanks for their love and service. The language of their hearts is, *God has so little loveliness that it is* MUCH *to love him* : Like a bad mother-in-law, who thinks it nothing to toil for her own children, because she loves them ; but grudges every step she takes for the rest, and thinks every little a great deal, because she cares not for them : So, such men think it nothing to rise early and sit up late, to get the world....to get riches, honor and pleasure ; for they love themselves : but think it MUCH to take the tenth part of the pains in religion ; because they love not God. Their whole frame of mind casts infinite contempt upon the glorious majesty of heaven, to whom all honor is infinitely due, and in whose service all the hosts of heaven account themselves perfectly blessed : They feel as if they deserved to be paid for all.

True, there are glorious rewards promised in the law and in the gospel: But why? and upon what grounds? A man may be said to be rewarded in three different senses. (1.) *When he receives what he strictly deserves, as an hireling receives his wages at night.* But, in this sense, the angels in heaven are not capable of a reward: for, in strict justice, they deserve nothing....*Luke* xvii. 9, 10—*Rom.* xi. 35. They are no hirelings, for God has a natural, original, underived right to them, as much as he has to the sun, moon and stars; and these, therefore, deserve to be paid for their shining, as much as the angels do for their working. Besides, if the angels do love God, it is no more than he infinitely deserves. And farther, the services of angels do not profit God, and so lay him under no obligations, any more than the birds profit the rising sun by their morning-songs, and so lay the sun under obligations to shine all day. *Job* xxii. 2, 3....*Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?* And yet, even in this gross sense, self-righteous persons feel, at heart, as if they deserved a reward for their good duties; though perhaps they are not willing to own it. Hence, they are so apt to think it would be very hard, unjust and cruel, if God should damn them for their past sins, notwithstanding all their good duties. *Isa.* lviii. 3....*Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not?* But, (2.) A man may be said to be rewarded, when, although, in strict justice, he deserves nothing; yet *he receives great favors at the hands of God, in testimony of the divine approbation of his person and services*: And thus, the angels in heaven, though they deserve nothing, yet have eternal life bestowed upon them, as a reward to their perfect obedience, in testimony of the divine approbation. God rewards them, not because they do him any good, nor because they deserve any thing at his hands; but because he infinitely loves *righteousness*, and to appear as an infinite friend to *this*, in his public conduct, as moral Governor of the world. The most that can be said

of the holiest angel in heaven, is, that he is fit to be approved in the sight of God, because he is perfectly such as God requires him to be. And now, because God loves to put honor upon virtue, and to exercise the infinite bountifulness of his nature, therefore he gives them the reward of eternal life. And thus God promises us eternal life, upon condition of perfect obedience, in the first covenant: as if God had said, "If "you will love me with all your heart, and obey me in every "thing, as you are bound in duty to do; then, although you will "deserve nothing, yet, as becomes a holy and good God....a "kind and bountiful Governor, I will make you everlastingly "blessed in the enjoyment of myself; and that in testimony "of my approbation of your perfect and steady fidelity." And so, by covenant and promise, this reward would have been *due*, had the condition been performed. Hence, that in Rom. iv. 4 ....*Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of* DEBT. And now here self-righteous persons are wont to come in with their works, and insist upon their right, and plead the reason of things, as well as the promise. "If we do "(say they) as well as we can, which is all that God does or "can in justice require of us, surely he will accept of us—it "would be cruel to cast us off—his goodness and faithfulness are "engaged for us:" Just as if they had now made full amends for all their past sins, by their repentance and reformation; and grown to be as good as angels, by taking some little pains in religion! For the best angel in heaven does not pretend to any other title to blessedness than this; namely, that he has done as well as he can, and that this is all that God has required, and although he is an unprofitable servant, yet he depends upon the promise, the goodness and faithfulness of his bountiful Creator. Indeed, self-righteous persons may *pretend* to expect all *for Christ's sake;* and say, that what they do, only entitles them to an interest in him; but it is all *mere pretence;* for still they think that God is *bound* to give them an interest in Christ and eternal life, *if they do as well as they can;* and would think God dealt very hardly with them, if he did not: So that their

real dependance, at bottom, is upon their own goodness, their own worth or worthiness, to make amends for past sins, and recommend them to God, and entitle them to all things; the infinite absurdity of which will be evident presently. Again, (3.) A man may be said to be rewarded, when he neither deserves any thing, nor is it fitting that his person and conduct, considered *merely* as they are in *themselves*, should be approved; but ought to be condemned, according to reason, and according to God's righteous law, they being so sinfully defective; nevertheless, such a man may be said to be rewarded, when, *merely* on the account of his interest in the *righteousness* and *worthiness* of CHRIST, his person and performances are accepted, and peculiar favors shewn him. And in this way are believers accepted, according to the covenant of grace, and entitled to the reward of eternal life: *Phil.* iii. 8, 9—*Eph.* i. 6—I *Pet.* ii. 5. Now, those who look for a reward in *this way*, will be so far from thinking it MUCH, which they have done for God, that they will forever set all down for nothing, and worse than nothing,* their best duties being so sinfully defective; and judge themselves worthy of hell every day, and every moment: And all their dependance will be on Christ's worthiness, and the free grace of God through him: *Luke* xviii. 13—*Rom.* iii. 24. And all that is said in the New Testament about God's rewarding the believer's good works, being viewed in this light, gives not the least countenance to a self-righteous spirit, but

* *Worse than nothing*....NOTE. I do not mean, that an imperfect, and very defective conformity to the law is worse, and more odious in God's sight, than no conformity at all; but only, that there is more *odiousness* than *amiableness* in such defective services: and that, therefore, we are, in the sight of God, on their account, more proper objects of hatred and punishment, than of love and reward, if considered merely as in ourselves, without any respect to our relation to Christ: so that, in point of recommending ourselves to God, we do, by our best duties, thus considered, rather discommend ourselves in his sight....and, in this sense, they are worse than nothing: they are even so far from paying our constant dues, that, in the sight of God, they constantly run us into debt. We are infinitely to blame in our best frames and best duties, and have not any thing in them, which tends, in God's sight, in the least degree, to counterbalance our blame.—But if any are desirous to see this point fully explained and proved, and all objections answered, I refer them to Mr. *Edwards*'s excellent discourse on *justification by faith alone*.

militates directly against it: And, indeed, if we were as perfect as the angels in heaven, it appears, from what has been said, that we should deserve no thanks. It is impudent, therefore, and wicked—it is contemptuous—and, in a sort, blasphemous, and most God-provoking, for a proud, conceited *Pharisee*, to feel as he does in his self-righteous frames.—And God might expostulate with such an one in this manner: "What, is there so little lovelines in me? And is it so "great, so hard, so self-denying, to love me, that you think it "such a *mighty* thing! and expect now, that all past sins shall "be forgiven, and my favor secured, for this good frame! yea, "and that I shall give you heaven into the bargain? What, are "your obligations to me so small, that I must be so much be-"holden to you for your love? What, did you never hear that I "was the Lord! and that it was I that stretched abroad the heav-"ens! and that you are my clay, whom I formed and fashion-"ed for myself?—Begone, thou impudent wretch, to hell, thy "proper place: thou art a despiser of my glorious majesty, "and your frame of spirit savors of blasphemy: Know it, I am "not so mean as you imagine, nor at all beholden to you for "your love." And this is one reason that the *sacrifice of the wicked* is such an *abomination to the Lord;* not only when they pray with a view to recommend themselves to their fellow-men, but also when, in doing their best, they only design to ingratiate themselves with God. Prov. xxi. 27.... *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination* (even his very best): *how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?* The infinite greatness, glory and excellency of God, and the infinite obligation thence resulting which we are under to love him with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing, renders a self-righteous spirit unspeakably odious, and infinitely provoking in the eyes of a holy God. But this will appear still plainer under the next particular. To proceed, therefore,

[2.] If we are under an infinite obligation to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and take everlasting delight in him, because of his infinite glory and excellency, then *the least*

disposition to disesteem him....to be indifferent about his interest and honor, or to disrelish communion with him ; or *the least disposition* to love ourselves more than God, and be more concerned about our interest and honor than about his, and to be pleased and delighted in the things of the world, more than in him, *must*, consequently, be *infinitely sinful*,* as is self-evident.

When, therefore, the great Governor of the world threatens eternal damnation for the least sin, (as in *Gal.* iii. 10.) he does the thing that is perfectly *right ;* for an infinite evil deserves an infinite punishment.

Hence, also, it is no wonder that the holiest saint on earth mourns so bitterly, and loaths and abhors himself so exceedingly for the remaining corruptions of his heart ; for, if the least disposition to depart from God and disrelish communion with him, and to be careless about his honor and interest, is infinitely sinful, then the best men that ever lived have infinite reason always to lie as in the dust, and have their hearts broken. Although it be so with them, that all which the world calls *good* and *great*, appears as dross to them ; and it is nothing to them to part with friends and estate, honor and ease, and all, for Christ ; and although they have actually suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, not worth mourning about, or repining after ; yet, notwithstanding all these attainments, attended with the fullest assurance of eternal glory in the world to come, they have infinite reason to do as they do....to dislike themselves....to hate themselves, and lie down in the dust *all in tears*, because still there is such a remaining disposition in their hearts to disesteem the Lord of glory....to neglect his interest, and depart from him ; and because they are so far from being what they ought to be, notwithstanding the obligations lying up-

* The least sin may be an infinite evil, because of the infinite obligation we are under to do otherwise, and yet all sins not be equally heinous : for there is as great a difference among infinites, as among finites ; I mean, among things that are infinite only in one respect : For instance, to be for ever in hell is an infinite evil, in respect of the duration ; but yet the damned are not all equally miserable. Some may be an hundred times as miserable as others, in degree ; although the misery of all is equal in point of duration.

on them are infinite. Oh ! this is infinitely vile and abominable, and they have reason indeed, therefore, always to loathe and abhor themselves, and repent in dust and ashes ; yea, they are infinitely to blame for not being more humble and penitent.—A sight and sense of these things made Job lie down in the dust and mourn so bitterly for his impatience under his past afflictions, though he had been the most patient man in the world.... *Job* xlii. 5, 6. This made the *psalmist* call himself a *beast*..... *Psalm* lxxiii. 22. And hence, Paul called himself the *chief of sinners*, and cried out, *I am carnal, sold under sin ; O wretched man that I am !* And hated to commend himself when the Corinthians drove him to it, and seemed to blush at every sentence, and, in a sort, recalled his words—*I am not a whit behind the very chief of the apostles, yet I am nothing.....I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I.* Such a sight of things kills a self-righteous spirit at root, in the most exalted saint; for he has nothing (all things considered) to make a righteousness of, but, in strict justice, merits eternal damnation every hour, and does nothing to make the least amends.

For, if perfect obedience merits no thanks, as was before observed ; and if the least sin is an infinite evil, and deserves an infinite punishment, as we have now seen, then a whole eternity of perfect obedience would do just nothing towards making the least amends for the smallest sin ; much less will the best services of the highest saint on earth : And, consequently, when Paul came to die, he deserved to be damned (considered merely as in himself), as much as when he was a bloody persecutor, breathing out threatenings and slaughter ; yea, and a great deal more too : for all his diligence and zeal in the service of Christ did just nothing towards making the least amends for what was past ; and his daily short-comings and sinful defects run him daily infinitely more and more into debt, which he did nothing to counterbalance : And hence, Paul accounts himself to be *nothing* (II *Cor.* xii. 11.), as well he might ; and all his attainments to be, in a sense, not worth remembering (*Phil.* iii. 13.) and looks upon himself the *chief of sinners* (I *Tim.* i. 15.), and

less than the least of all saints (*Eph.* iii. 8.), and durst venture his soul upon nothing but mere free grace through Jesus Christ.... *Phil.* iii. 8, 9. And thus it is with every believer, even the most holy, although he daily sees what a God he has sinned against—how he has sinned against him, and does, from a gracious respect to God, mourn for sin, for all sin, as the greatest evil, and sincerely turns from all to the Lord, and gives up himself to God, to love him and live to him forever; yet he feels that all this makes *no amends* at all for his *sins*, but that he really deserves to be damned for them as much as ever; yea, he feels that he is infinitely blame-worthy for not being more humble and penitent and self-abhorring, and that his desert of damnation is infinitely increasing continually: And hence, he looks upon the grace that saves him as absolutely and divinely free, and infinitely great; and always derives all his hopes of happiness from the free grace of God through Jesus Christ.—And this is what the apostle means when he speaks of *his living by the faith of the son of God*....Gal. ii. 20....*of his rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh*....Phil. iii. 3. And this was the cause of his so earnestly longing to be *found* not in himself, but in *Christ....not having on his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith*....Phil. iii. 8, 9. How directly contrary to all this is the temper of the blind, conceited Pharisee, as expressed by Maimonides, the Jew, who was professedly one of that sect? "Every man," says he, "hath "his sins, and every man his merits: and he that hath more "merits than sins, is a just man; but he that hath more sins "than merits, is a wicked man." And this is the way of such men—they put their sins, as it were, into one scale, and their good duties into the other; and when they fancy their goodness outweighs their badness, then they look upon themselves in the favor of God. But to return,

From what has been said, we may learn, that the *more sensible* any man is of the infinite glory and excellency of God, and of his infinite obligations thence resulting to love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, the *clearer* will he see

that perfect obedience deserves no thanks, and that the least sin is an infinite evil and deserves an infinite punishment; and so he will renounce his own righteousness, die to himself, and come down to nothing, more and more; and so will be proportionably more and more sensible of his absolute need of Christ and free grace: And hence, the more holy a man grows, the more humble will he be. And, on the contrary, the *more insensible* a man is of God's infinite glory and excellency, and of his obligations thence resulting, the more will he value his duties, and the less evil will he see in sin, and the less sensible will he be of his ill desert, and of his need of Christ and free grace.—And hence, a self-righteous, impenitent, Christ-despising spirit reigns in all who *know not God*: And thus we see some of the consequences necessarily following from that infinite obligation to love God with all our hearts which we are under, resulting from the infinite glory and excellency of the divine nature.—But to pass on,

3. This obligation we are under to love God with all our hearts, arising from his infinite glory and excellency, is, in the nature of things, *eternally* binding. God, his being, perfections, and glory will be eternal: God will always be infinitely amiable—always as amiable as he is now; and there will be always, therefore, the *same reason* that he should be loved, for being what he is; even the *very same reason* that there is now: This obligation is therefore perpetually binding amidst all the changes of this life. Whether we are sick or well, in prosperity or in adversity; whether we are raised to honor with David, or live in affluence with Solomon; or whether we are in prison with Joseph, or on the dung-hill with Job, or wandering about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, with those mentioned in the *eleventh* to the *Hebrews*, still this obligation upon us to love God, is invariably the same: For God is always infinitely amiable in himself; yea, and always will be so, whether we are in the earth, or in heaven, or in hell: And therefore it always is, and always will be, our indispensible duty to love him with all our hearts, let what will become of us,

and let our circumstances, as to happiness and misery, be what they may.

Did our obligations to love God arise merely from a consideration of *something else* besides the *eternal excellency* of the divine nature—from something which might altogether *cease* in time, then might it possibly, some time or other, *cease* to be our *duty* to love God with all our hearts: But assuredly it can never *cease*, until God *ceases* to be what he is. The infinite obligation hence arising will be *eternally binding:* Indeed, if all our obligations to love God did arise merely from selfish considerations, then, in hell, where these selfish considerations will cease, it would cease to be a duty to love God. If I were obliged to love God, only because he loves me—is kind to me, and designs to make me happy, then, when he ceases to love me, to be kind to me, and to intend my happiness, all my obligations to him would cease; and it would be no sin not to love him: But now, since our obligations to love God arise originally from his being what he is in himself, antecedent to all selfish considerations; therefore it will forever remain our duty to love him, let our circumstances, as to happiness or misery, be what they will: And not to love him with all our hearts, will forever be infinitely wrong. Hence the guilt of the fallen angels has been increasing ever since their first apostacy; and the guilt of all the damned will be increasing to all eternity; and no doubt their punishment will increase in the same proportion. How inconceivably and infinitely dreadful, therefore, will be their case, who are thus continually sinking deeper and deeper in that *bottomless pit* of woe and misery! And indeed, if this be the case, hell may well be compared, as it is in scripture, to a *bottomless pit*....Rev. ix. 1. & xx. 1.

4. This obligation which we are under to love God with all our hearts, resulting from the infinite excellency of the divine nature, is also *unchangeably* binding. As unchangeable as the divine nature is—as unalterable as the divine beauty is, even so unchangeable, so unalterable, in the very nature of things, is this our infinite obligation to love him supremely, live to him

ultimately, and delight in him superlatively. As God is infinitely lovely in himself, and unchangeably so, so it is self-evident we are under an infinite and invariable obligation to love him with all our hearts. This cannot but be always our duty. So long as God remains what he is, this will remain our duty. It will, in the nature of things, be unalterably right and fit to love him ; and not to do so, unalterably unfit and wrong. Our sinking down into ever so bad a temper, and getting to be ever so remote from a disposition to love him, can no more free us from the obligation, than it can cause him to cease being amiable. He must cease to be amiable, before our obligation thence arising can possibly cease to be binding. If there be no alteration in his infinite beauty, there can possibly be no alteration in the infinite obligation thence arising. While God remains what he is, and while our natural powers and faculties are maintained in being, it must continue our duty to love God with all our hearts, and it cannot but be our duty. In the nature of things it is right; and the obligation is just as incapable of any alteration, as is the equality between twice two and four. The fallen angels are of so bad a temper, that the very thoughts of God will, doubtless, sooner than any thing, stir up all their hatred : But God deserves to be perfectly loved by them, as much as he did before their apostacy. There is a great alteration in the temper of their minds ; but not the least shadow of change in the divine beauty. Their having contracted so bad and wicked a temper, cannot surely make it right and lawful for them to indulge it, and continue in it. Their impious revolt surely cannot free them from the authority and government of Almighty God. He deserves their homage and subjection, as much as ever he did : The original ground of *all* still remains ; he is still THE LORD. The same may be said of fallen man—it is impossible that our bad temper should free us from our obligation to love God with all our hearts. It is still, in the nature of things, as wrong, not to love God with all our hearts, as ever it was, or as it would have been, had we not joined with the fallen angels, and turned apostates. It must

be so, unless our being of so bad and wicked a temper makes it right for us to continue of such a temper, and we not at all blame-worthy for acting agreeably thereto; that is, unless our being so very bad and wicked, makes us not at all to blame for our badness and wickedness: And so, according to this rule, the viler any creature grows, and the more averse to God and to all good, the less he is to blame; which is one of the grossest absurdities in the world. Therefore,

(1.) *The divine law which requires us to love God with all our hearts, considered as a rule of duty, is, in the nature of things, unalterable, and absolutely incapable of any abatement, more or less.* The thing required, is, in the nature of things, our duty, antecedent to any consideration of an express law in the case—as that children ought to honor their parents, and neighbors do as they would be done by, are things in themselves right, and duties antecedent to any consideration of an express law in the case....*Eph.* vi. 1. These things would have been duties, if there had never been any laws made concerning them by God or man: Yea, they are, in their own nature, so right, that they cannot but be our duty; and to dishonor our parents, and cheat, and defraud, and injure our neighbor, cannot but be wrong: So, to love God with all our hearts is originally right and fit, and our duty; and would have been so, had there never have been any positive, express law in the case.

Now the grand reason why God, the great Governor of the world, ever made a law requiring us to love him with all our hearts, was because it was thus, in its own nature, so infinitely fit: And now to suppose that he would repeal, or alter, or abate this law, when the grounds and reasons of his first making of it remain as forceable as ever—when the thing required is as right and fit as ever—and when it becomes him, as Governor of the world, still to require it as much as ever;—I say, to suppose such a thing, casts the highest reproach upon all his glorious perfections: It casts the highest reflection upon his infinite *holiness*, whereby he is infinitely inclined to love right and hate wrong; for it supposes him to release his creatures from doing

right, and to allow them to do wrong....a little at least: It casts the highest reflection upon his impartial *justice*, whereby he is infinitely inclined to give every one his due; for it supposes him to release his creatures from giving unto God the glory which is his due, and to allow them to keep back part at least: It casts the highest reflection upon his *stability* and *truth;* for it supposes him to alter his law when there is no reason for it: yea, it reflects even upon his *goodness* itself; for it is so far from being a benefit to his creatures to have this excellent law altered, which is so completely suited to the perfection and happiness of their nature, that it would be one of the greatest and sorest calamities which could happen. Like the altering all the good laws and rules in a family, merely to humor and gratify a rebellious child, who will not be governed. Such a child should be made to conform to the wholesome laws of the family, and not the laws be abated and brought down to a level with his bad temper and perverse humor: And, finally, it casts the highest reflection upon the infinite *wisdom* of the great Governor of the world; for it supposes him to go counter to his own honor and to the good of his creatures, to counteract all his perfections, and contradict the reason and nature of things; and that merely in condescension unto, and in compliance with the sinful, corrupt taste and inclinations of an apostate, rebellious, God-hating world.

And now, how could the great Governor of the world clear and vindicate the honor of his great name, in making any abatements in this law, which requires us to love him with all our hearts? Would he say that *he had before required more love than was his due?* Surely, nothing can be much more blasphemous than to suppose this. Would he say that *he does not deserve so much as he did?* Still it is equally blasphemous to suppose this. Would he say that *less* than is his due is ALL that is his due? But this would be to contradict himself in express terms. Or would he openly profess *to quit his right* and freely *allow* his creatures to despise him a little, and sin sometimes, in condescension unto and compliance with the corrupt inclinations of

their sinful hearts? But this, in the nature of things, would be infinitely wrong and dishonorable. Upon what grounds, then, could the supreme Governor of the world go about to make abatements in a law so holy, just and good, that only requires us to love him with all our hearts, which, in the nature of things, is so infinitely right and suitable? Or upon what grounds can we possibly desire any abatements to be made, unless we even profess that we do not like the law....that we are averse to loving God with all our hearts....that it is a very tedious, self-denying thing to us, and what we can by no means freely come into; and so, upon this footing, desire some abatements! Or, which is the same thing, honestly own "that we love sin so "dearly that God must tolerate us in it, or we cannot approve "of his government."

But, indeed, God can as easily cease to be, as go about to license and tolerate the least sin; and he had rather *Heaven and earth should pass away*, than that the least *jot or tittle of his law should fail*....Mat. v. 18.

How can any body, therefore, once imagine that Christ came down from heaven and died, to purchase this abatement of the law of God, and procure this lawless liberty for his rebellious subjects? What! did he desert his Father's interest and honor, and the honor of his law and government, and spill his precious blood, that he might persuade the great Governor of the world to slacken the reins of government, and give out this impious license to iniquity?—Surely to suppose this, is to make Christ a friend to sin, and an enemy to God.

What, then, do *they* mean, who, in their prayers, presume to thank God for the gracious abatements which he has made in his law? And what do ministers mean by telling their people, from the pulpit, that the law is abated, and that *sincere* obedience is ALL that is now required of us?—Indeed, if poor secure sinners are made to believe that this was the great business Christ came into the world upon, no wonder if their impious hearts are pleased, and if they seem to love Christ, and prize the gospel, and give thanks to God for this great goodness and conde-

scension ; for hereby they are delivered from that strictness in religion which they hate, and a wide door is opened for them to sin without blame : Yea, they have the comfort to think that it is *no sin* not to love God with *all* their heart, with *all* their soul, and with *all* their strength : And, generally, a very little matter of religion, they think, will serve. And now it's good times, and they bless themselves. But, alas ! They *feed upon the wind : A deceived heart hath turned them aside.*

But, by the way, to what purpose was it for Christ to die to purchase this abatement? What need was there of it? Or what good could it do ? For, if the law *really* required *too much*, the Governor of the world was obliged, in justice, to make some abatements : And so, the death of Christ in the case was perfectly needless. And if the law required but *just enough*, the Governor of the world could not, in justice, make any abatements : And so Christ must have died *in vain*, and totally lost his end.

But, indeed, Christ never came into the world upon this design ; as he expressly declares, in Mat. v. 17, 18....*Think not that I come to destroy the law or the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* And this is the very thing he condemns the Pharisees for, through all this chapter, that they, in effect, taught this doctrine, that the law was abated : that they taught, that although the law did forbid some external and more gross acts of sin, yet it did not the first stirring of corruption at heart, and some lesser iniquities : For instance, that " they must not commit *murder ;* but that it was no harm to be " angry without cause, and speak reproachfully, and keep a se- " cret grudge at heart....(*verse* 21—26.) That they must not " commit *adultery ;* but that it was no harm to have secret las- " civious thoughts....(*verse* 27—30.) That they must not be " guilty of *perjury ;* but that there was no harm in little petty " oaths in common conversation....(*verse* 33—37.) That they " must not *hate their friends ;* but there was no harm in hating

" their enemies ;" (*verse* 43—47.) These, and such like allowances, they taught, were made in the law ; and so, that such things were not sinful. But our Savior condemns their doctrine, as false and damning ; and insists upon it, that the law is not abated, and never shall be ; but says, it still requires us to be *perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect*....(verse 48.) and declares, that *if our righteousness exceedeth not the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees*, (who were so much for abating the law) *we shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven*...(verse 20.) so *far* was our blessed Savior from any design to abate the holy law of God, or lessen our obligations to a perfect conformity to it : And indeed, if Christ had died, and should die a thousand times, to purchase an abatement of the law, (if it be lawful to make such a supposition) it would be to no purpose ; for it cannot be abated, unless God ceases to be what he is : For so long as God is infinitely lovely, we shall *necessarily* be under an infinite obligation to love him with *all* our heart, and with *all* our strength ; and it will *necessarily* be infinitely wrong not to do so. The truth is, that God's sending his Son into the world to die for the redemption of sinners, instead of freeing us from our original natural obligations to keep the law, binds us more strongly so to do ; as we shall afterwards see. Psalm cxix. 160.... *Thy word is true from the beginning : And every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever :* (Ver. 128.) *I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right.* (Ver. 144.) *The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting.* (Ver. 152.) *Thou has founded them forever.* And therefore (ver. 160,) *Every one of them will endure forever ;* as if the *Psalmist* had said, " The thing required in thy law " is, in its own nature, right, everlastingly right ; and, there- " fore, as Governor of the world, thou hast by law forever set- " tled and established it as duty—by a law never to be altered, " but to endure forever : And forever, therefore, will it en- " dure."

OBJ. *But is it fair and just for God to require more of his creatures than they can do ?*

Ans. What are we come to, in this apostate world, that we cannot see it to be just and fair, in the great Governor of heaven and earth, the infinitely glorious God, to require us, as his creatures, so much as to love him, with *all* our hearts? What! Is this *too much?* Is this more than he deserves from us? Or does the truth lie here....that we hate him so, that we cannot find it in our hearts to love him; and therefore cry, "He must "not insist upon it; or, if he does, he deals unjustly, and is "very hard with us?" But is not this the very thing those citizens did, who hated their Prince, and sent after him, saying, *We will not have this man to reign over us?*....Luke xix. 14. These hints may serve as an answer for the present: But of this more hereafter.

But while *some* are pleading, that Christ died to purchase an abatement of the law, *others* carry the point still further, and *say* that Christ died *entirely to disannul it;* and that now it *wholly* ceases to be a rule of life to believers: whenas one great and declared design of Christ's coming into the world was to recover his people to a conformity thereto: (*Tit.* ii. 11, 12, 13.) Oh how men love their corruptions, and hate God and his holy law, and long to have it cashiered and removed out of the world, that so they may live as they list, and yet escape the reproaches of their consciences here, and eternal punishment hereafter! But God *sitteth King forever,* and will assert the *rights* of his crown, and maintain the honor of his majesty, and the glory of his great name, and vindicate his injured law; although it be in the eternal damnation of millions of his rebellious subjects: Luke xix. 27....*But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.* And here, by the way, we may see what an aversion men have to right thoughts of God and divine things; and may be convinced of the absolute necessity of a supernatural, all-conquering light, to remove these prejudices, and make men see and believe the truth, and love, and cordially embrace it. (*John* viii. 47—I *Cor.* ii. 14.) A holy God does not appear infinitely glorious and amiable to an unholy heart; and

sinners, not seeing the *grounds* of loving God with all their hearts, do not see the *reason* of the law ; they do not see how *holy*, *just*, and *good* the law is, and the *carnal mind* being *enmity against God*, is, at the same time, enmity against the *law*, which is a transcript of the divine nature....(*Rom.* viii. 7.) And hence, sinners do not love to believe either God or his law to be what they really are : And this temper makes them blind to what the scripture says, and leads them to frame a false image of God, and entertain false notions of his law, that they may have a *God* and a *law* both to their own minds.

And now, as are men's notions of the *law*, such are their notions of *religion ;* the essence of which principally consists in a conformity to the law.

Hence, here is *one ;* he pleads for great *abatements* in the law, and he contents himself with the mere *form* of religion. He is not unjust, nor an extortioner, nor an adulterer ; but much better than some of his neighbors : He prays in his family, goes to public worship, and attends the Sacrament, and thinks himself a very good man ; like him in *Luke* xviii. 9, 10, &c. But as for the doctrines relating to our *natural depravity*, *regeneration*, *conversion*, *faith*, *communion with God*, and *all the inside of religion*, he understands nothing about them ; they seem as strange as it did to *Nicodemus* to hear Christ discourse about the *new birth*....*John* iii. And all the talk about the *inward influences* of the holy spirit, in awakening, convincing, humbling, and converting a sinner, and in enlightening, teaching, quickening, comforting, and sanctifying a believer, is quite unintelligible ; for these things do not come into his notions of religion. According to his opinion, the law is brought down so low, that it is an easy thing to become a good man : The change is but small, and there is scarce any need of the spirit's help ; much less any room for the exercise of sovereign grace ; for he is so good-natured, that he can become good of his own free will, (i. e. according to his notions of goodness,) and do that which shall effectually entitle him to the promises : And thus he has the staff in his own hand. And now here is a

charming religion, perfectly suited to the taste of an apostate world; for it is calculated to quiet the conscience, while the heart lies out estranged from God, and dead in sin...*Rom.* vii. 8, 9. Especially, so much of it as is for their credit, and apparently serves their worldly interest, will pretty readily and heartily be fallen in with; and *the best have their failings....no man is perfect*....and *I endeavor to be sincere*....and *the best have their doubts.....assurance is not to be attained*,. and such-like pleas, help to keep their consciences secure. And now, O how they love those ministers, that cry, *peace, peace!* but hate those that would search things to the bottom, and sound an alarm to secure sinners, and deluded hypocrites. The same temper that makes them hate God and his law, makes them hate his ministers too: And they are for another kind of God, and for another kind of law—another kind of religion, and another kind of ministers, that they may have all to their mind. And, when all is done, they are confident they are now in the right, because they are suited: They love to have it so, and therefore firmly *believe* it is so.

Hence, again, here is *another*, who has been mightily terrified, and in great distress, under a sense of the wrath of God and the dreadfulness of damnation; but, in the distressing hour, he has had it *revealed* to him (by the spirit of God, he thinks) that his *sins are forgiven;* and now he is *sure* of heaven, and is ravished at the thoughts of eternal glory: he holds it a great *sin* to *doubt;* and all his religion consists in faith and joy, *i. e.* in believing that his sins are forgiven, and rejoicing in his blessed and happy and safe estate, and in the expectation of future glory: But as for a real conformity to the *law*, it makes up no part of his religion. He understands rightly nothing what the law requires....he is neither sensible of his duty to God, or to his fellow-men; yea, he hates to hear any thing about *law* or *duty*: It is all *legal*, he cries, *and tends to kill religion, and to wound weak christians, and grieve and drive away the spirit of grace;* and no preaching suits his taste, but what consists in telling over and commending such experiences as his, and in setting forth

the love of God and Christ to such, and calling upon such to believe and rejoice, and never doubt their state again : And, in general, those things which tend to strengthen his confidence and increase his joy, he esteems right and good ; and all things of a contrary tendency he esteems wrong and bad. This seems to be his only *criterion* of right and wrong, and the only rule he makes use of in drawing up a judgment ; but as for the *law*, it is of no use with him. There is doubtless many a man that feels and acts and lives as if the law was abated, who yet will not plead for that doctrine : So, doubtless, there is many a man that feels and acts and lives as if the law wholly ceased to be a rule of life, who yet will not venture to say so. The force of education, and their worldly interest and credit keep men many times from shewing what they are by an open profession : however, secretly this temper reigns within them ; yea, sometimes it breaks out into open light, in their visible conduct.— But, as strange as it may seem, there are multitudes that not only have the root of these things in their hearts, but really believe them and openly profess and plead for them. Hence it is, on the one hand, that the *Arminian*, *Neonomian*, and *Pelagiam* errors have taken their rise, and the *Antinomian* on the other.— Wrong notions of God lie at the bottom ; and then wrong notions of the law ; and then wrong notions of religion in general : and all originally proceed and grow up out of the wrong temper of men's minds ; for all unregenerate men would fain have a *God*, and a *law*, and a *religion* to suit the temper of their hearts. *Micah* iv. 5....*For all people will walk every one in the name of his God.*

In the mean time, the truly godly man, who sees that the *obligation* which he is under, to love God with all his heart, resulting from the excellency of the divine nature, is *unchangeable*, and that the *law* which requires this is *unalterable*, instead of going about to contrive a religion that may suit the natural temper of his heart, is convinced that the temper of his heart is the *very* thing that must be changed : He is convinced of his infinite obligation to be altogether such as the *law* requires

him to be, and that he is infinitely blameable for the least defect. Hence, those words, *The law is holy, just, and good....the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin: O wretched man that I am!* do exactly express the thoughts of the most exalted saint on earth; yea, even of the great Saint Paul himself....*Rom.* vii. 12, 14, 24. Indeed, had St. Paul thought that the law was wholly disannulled, or much abated, he might then have imagined that he was so good as to be quite free from sin, or pretty near being so, and been ready to speak the language of the Pharisee—*God, I thank thee, I am not as other men.* But now, notwithstanding all his high and wonderful attainments, yet, when he considered what the *law* was which he was under, and how very far he was from being exactly what that required, the native language of his humble heart is, *I am carnal, sold under sin! O wretched man that I am!** And now the Apostle, from a sense of his infinite obligations to be what the law requires, and of his great distance from this, *forgets the things which are behind;* and he *runs*....he *wrestles*....he *fights*....he *strives*...he *keeps under his body*....he *lays aside every weight;* in short, he appears like a man in a perfect agony; *so great was his sense of duty, and so much had he to do*: And, at the same time, from a sense of his impotency and of his unworthiness....of his need of the redeemer and the sanctifier, it is his maxim to *pray always*, and to ask all things *in the name of Christ.* Now, in his example we have the temper which prevails more or less in every godly man exactly painted: And thus we have had pictured, in miniature, three different sorts of religion, arising from three different notions of the law. The *picture* is begun; and, in the sequel, I purpose to paint all three as near to the life as I can, that we may see what they are, and wherein they differ; which

* Some have thought that St. *Paul* had arrived so nigh to *perfection*, that he could not speak these words of *himself*. Their mistake seems to arise from their wrong notions of the *law*, to which St. *Paul* compared himself, and according to which he drew up his judgment. And from the same source it seems to be, that they can think those words, (*ver.* 22,) applicable to the unregenerate...*I delight in the law of God after the inward man.* When, in truth, the unregenerate are, in their temper, diametrically opposite to the law....*Rom.* viii. 7.

is right, and which is wrong.—But so much for the first inference, that the *law*, as a *rule of duty*, cannot be *repealed or abated.* And now to proceed,

2. From what has been said, it is evident that *the law, in its threatenings of eternal damnation for the least sin, is equally incapable of any repeal or abatement :* for if our obligation to love God with all our hearts and obey him in every thing, resulting from the divine perfections, is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable ; and if, therefore, the least sin necessarily be infinitely evil, and deserving of an infinite punishment, and unalterably so, then the law, considered as threatening eternal damnation for the least sin, is, in its own nature, unalterably holy and just ; and consequently it cannot be repealed, consistently with the holiness, justice, and honor of the great Governor of the world. If the Governor of the world had, in a *mere arbitrary manner*, made a law that sin should be punished with eternal damnation, then he might, in a *mere arbitrary manner*, have repealed it : but since, in the nature of things, *justice called for it*, that such a law should be made, therefore, so long as the grounds and reasons of the law remain, the law cannot, in *justice*, be repealed.

None can deny but that the great Governor of the world has actually made a law that sin shall be punished with eternal damnation ; and none can deny but that this law is to be put in execution, to the full, at and after the great judgment-day : But if *justice had not called for it*, surely the *infinitely good* Governor of the world would never have made such a law, much less would he ever put it in execution : for, to make and execute such a law, *in a merely arbitrary, sovereign manner*, when, in the nature of things, *justice does not call for it*, would be infinitely cruel and tyrannical, and perfectly inconsistent with the divine perfections, as is self-evident....See *Genesis* xviii. 25. and *Ezekiel* xviii. 25.

But, then, if the great Governor of the world made this law *not arbitrarily*, but because, in the nature of things, *justice called for it*, then, so long as the reason and ground of the law remain, the law itself cannot, *in justice*, ever be repealed. If jus-

tice called for its being made, then it cannot be *un-made*, consistently with justice, so long as the ground and reason of it remain, as is self-evident. But the reason of the law is, in the nature of things, *unalterable :* for the reason of the law was the *infinite evil of sin*, whereby it deserved an infinite punishment. As long, therefore, as sin remains an infinite evil, so long must the law stand unrepealed : but sin will always be an infinite evil, so long as we are under infinite obligations to love God with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing, which we shall always be, so long as God remains infinitely glorious and amiable, and this will be forever ; therefore, this law can *never* possibly, consistently with divine *justice*, be repealed.

For any, therefore, to desire to have it repealed, is to turn enemy to the holiness, and justice, and honor of the supreme Ruler of the world, as well as to his law and government ; and argues that they have no regard to the rectitude and fitness of things, but only to *self-interest ;* as those among men are real enemies to the civil government who desire the good and wholesome laws thereof to be repealed : And it is upon this ground that St. Paul concludes *carnal* men to be at *enmity against* GOD, because they are enemies to his LAW....(*Rom.* viii. 7.) For if men loved God, they would be disposed to love his law and government, which express his nature.

To suppose, therefore, that the Son of God came into the world and died, that the law, in its *threatenings*, might be *repealed*, is to suppose that he also is turned an enemy to God...to his holiness and justice....to his law and government ; and that he is properly gone over to be on the side of his father's rebellious subjects.

Besides, to what purpose would it have been (on the hypothesis of these men), for Christ to have died, that the law, in its threatenings, might be repealed ? What need was there of it ? or what good would it have done ? For if, in *justice*, it ought to have been repealed, there was no need of his dying to procure this ; or if, in *justice*, it ought *not* to be repealed, then his dying could not procure it, and so would do no good. The righteous

Governor of the world would have repealed it of his own accord, if it had been right and fit so to do; and if, in the nature of things, it was not right, then not any thing whatever could persuade him to do it.

But the truth is, Christ came into the world, and died *to answer all the demands of the law;* that so, although the sinner be saved, yet the law might never be repealed, but be firmly established: for the Governor of heaven and earth was utterly against the law being repealed, as a thing in itself infinitely unreasonable: And therefore the Apostle says, *Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid! yea, we establish the law....* Rom. iii. 31. And indeed it was nothing but God's infinite aversion to repeal the law, as a thing in itself infinitely unfit and wrong, that was the thing which made the death of Christ needful: for, if the law might have been repealed, sinners might have been saved without any more ado; but, if it could not, and must not be repealed, then the demands of it must be answered by some means or other, or every sinner damned: And now Christ stepped in and did this; and so secured the honor of God's holiness and justice, law and government, and opened a way for the sinner's salvation. And this account of the reason of Christ's death the scriptures plainly give us:—Gal. iii. 10, 13, 14....*Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.—Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ:* For (Heb. ix. 22.) *without shedding of blood there is no remission:* Therefore (*Rom.* iii. 25, 26.) Christ was *set forth to be a propitiation for sin....to declare his righteousness ....that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus:* And hence (ver. 31,) *Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid! yea, we establish the law.*

Yea, the Apostle evidently sets out upon this hypothesis, that the law is not repealed, but stands in full force: He lays this down as a *first principle*, in that argumentative discourse which we have in the three first chapters of his epistle to the *Romans:*

Chap. i. ver. 18....*The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.* And taking this for granted, he goes on to prove, *that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin*, and so *the whole world guilty before God;* to the 19th verse of the 3d chapter: And hence he argues, *that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified.* But now, if the law was repealed, the whole world was not guilty before God, nor any one in the world: *For sin is not imputed where there is no law*....Rom. v. 13. And if the law was repealed, what need was there of such a long train of arguments, to prove, that no flesh could be justified by the law? For it would have been enough to have said, that a repealed law could neither justify nor condemn any body. And why does he use such arguments as he does? For thus he reasons, "The law requires perfect "obedience as a condition of life, and threatens tribulation and "wrath against every soul of man that doth evil: But *Jews* and "*Gentiles* have all sinned: therefore are all guilty and condemn-"ed according to law; and consequently cannot be cleared and "justified by law:" For all this reasoning supposes that the law is as much in force as ever it was: And, accordingly, he goes on to show, that the design of Christ's death was to answer the demands of the law, that there might be a way opened for the salvation of sinners, consistent with divine justice, and, at the same time, the law not be made void, but established; as we have before observed.—And now this being the case,

Hence, we find the scriptures every where look upon those who have not a special interest in the righteousness of Christ, by faith, as being as much under the wrath of God and curse of the law, as if Christ had never died. John iii. 18....*He that believeth not is condemned already:* Ver. 36....*The wrath of God abideth upon him:* And, Gal. iii. 10....*As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse*: And, Rom. i. 18....*The wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* Thus the wrath of God is revealed against the unbeliever; yea, abides upon him; yea, the law condemns and curses him: But

if the law had been repealed by the death of Christ, all the world would have been freed from the curse: For a repealed law can neither bless the righteous, nor curse the wicked; but stands for nothing.

And hence, also, we find that Christless sinners, when awakened by the holy spirit to see and feel what a state they are in, are always convinced that they are under the wrath of God and curse of the law; and hereby are made to understand their need of a Savior....(*Rom.* iii. 19, 20.) But if the law had been repealed by the death of Christ, this could not be; for they would then have been under no wrath, nor curse; nor would any have ever felt *a spirit of bondage*, as they do in every age of the world, and as they used to do in St. Paul's day....(*Rom.* viii. 15.) For it is the *law* only *that works wrath*....Rom. iv. 15.

And hence we shall find, even all the world shall find, and thousands and thousands to their everlasting sorrow, that when the day of judgment comes, the law shall be executed with the utmost severity upon all that *know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ*....(II. Thes. i. 7, 8.) And God's justice, in so doing, will shine bright in the sight of all worlds; for he designs, on that day, to reveal the righteousness of his judgments: and hence it is called *the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*....(Rom. ii. 5.) But if the law is repealed by the death of Christ, and if God has told the world that he has repealed it....for him now to revive it, and judge and condemn the world by it, would be to cast contempt upon the death of Christ, and deceive his poor creatures, and unmercifully and unrighteously judge and condemn them, by a law that was repealed....a law they never were under, and so ought never to have been judged by. From the whole, therefore, it is evident, that the law that threatens eternal damnation for the least sin, never has been, and never will be repealed.

Well, then, (if this be the case) may ministers thunder hell and damnation against a secure, wicked world; and well may poor sinners tremble under a sense of divine wrath, when their eyes begin to be opened to see where they are: for all those

comforts that the formalist gets by thinking the law is abated or disannulled, and so his state safe, are but the result of an erroneous head, and a heart secure in sin. And what has been said under this particular, will rationally account for all the agony and distress of an awakened sinner. When God, the great Governor of the world, the revenger of sin, begins to make the poor sinner remember his ways and his doings which have not been right, and see what a creature he is, and what a condition he is in, and be sensible of what he deserves; and when he comes to understand that his soul is forfeited, and that it is right that justice should take place, and that God is at liberty to do as he pleases, surely this must be heart-rending, soul-distressing to a poor, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving creature.

And if God will not repeal the law, but still insist upon it, that it is holy and just, no wonder the sinner is made to own it too, before ever he is pardoned: For it would be unbecoming the supreme Lord of the universe, to grant a pardon to a guilty rebel, that is too high-hearted to own that the law, by which he stands condemned, is holy and just. O how right it is, that the sinner should come down, and see, and know, and own forever, that he is justly condemned, and, as such, apply himself to the sovereign grace of God, through Jesus Christ, for a pardon! And O how sovereign, and free, and divine, is that grace that pardons and saves the poor, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving wretch, through Jesus Christ! (*Rom.* iii. 19, 27.) And thus as God the Father honors the law, by refusing to repeal it, and God the Son, by answering its demands—so does God, the Holy Ghost, by making the poor sinner see, and feel, and own, that it is holy and just, before ever he internally reveals the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, unto him; so that the law is honored, and sin is embittered, and the sinner humbled, and grace glorified, all at once: As in the external revelation God has made in his word, the law is before the gospel; so it is in internal influences and operations of the holy spirit upon the elect; and that for the same reason, that *the law* might be a *school-master, to bring men to Christ.*

To conclude, from all that has been said, we may learn what to think of the religion and of the hopes of these two sorts of men. (1.) The *legal hypocrite*, who, supposing that the *good old law* is repealed and laid aside, and that a *new law*, only requiring *sincere obedience*, is established in its room, merely from self-love, and for self-ends, sets about duty and endeavors to be sincere; and here on this foundation builds all his hopes of acceptance in the sight of God: for since the law is not repealed, but stands in full force, therefore the religion of such is not *that thing* which God requires or will accept; and their *new law* is a *whim*, and their hopes are all built on the sand: Their whole scheme results from a total ignorance of God, and his law, and the present state of mankind; and is entirely built on falsehood. (2.) The *evangelical hypocrite*—all whose *faith* and *joy* originally result from a supposed discovery of the love of God, or love of Christ, or that his sins are pardoned. This discovery is the foundation of his faith, and his faith is the foundation of his joy and of all his religion: And yet the thing discovered is a lie; for, as has been proved, every one, until he is a believer, until he has acted faith, is not pardoned, but condemned—is not beloved of God, but under his wrath; and, therefore, to have pardon of sin and the love of God discovered before the first act of faith, and to have such a discovery lay the foundation for the first act of faith, and a foundation for all religion, is to be imposed upon with a lie, and to have a gross falsehood lie at the foundation of their faith....their religion, and of all their hopes. The *legal* hypocrite may be convinced by such scriptures as these....*Luke* xviii. 9—13....*Rom.* iii. 20—31. and *Chapter* iv. *ver.* 5.; which prove that a man cannot find acceptance with God by his own righteousness: And the *evangelical* hypocrite may be convinced by such scriptures as these....*John* iii. 18, 36. *Acts* iii. 19.; which prove that a sinner is not pardoned till after faith. A true sight and sense of the law would effectually convince the one, and the other, that all their hopes are built on wrong apprehensions of things, and that all their religion is counterfeit; and that they are yet in the gall of bitterness and bonds

of iniquity : and the one would no longer venture his soul on his *own righteousness*, nor the other on his *discovery*. The law's insisting upon perfect, sinless obedience, would convince the one that his own righteousness might not be depended upon ; and the law's cursing every unbeliever, would convince the other that his discovery was false ; and the law's requiring us to love God primarily for his own beauty, would convince both of their graceless estates, in as much as the religion of both primarily takes its rise from self-love. It is from the want of a realizing sight and sense of the nature and extent of the law, and that out of Christ we are exposed to all the curses thereof, that a sinful, guilty world are so insensible of their graceless, and their wretched and miserable condition, and so apt to flatter themselves that they are rich, and increased in goods, and stand in need of nothing. Rom. vii. 8, 9....*Without the law sin was dead. I was alive without the law once.*

Thus we see that the *obligation* which we were under to love God with all our hearts, *resulting from the infinite excellency of the divine nature*, antecedent to all selfish considerations, is *infinitely*, *eternally*, and *unchangeably* binding : And thus we see a variety of important consequences necessarily following therefrom : And I have insisted the longer upon the nature of this obligation, not only because it is the first and greatest, but because it has a mighty influence in all our *additional* obligations.—For,

5. And lastly. *It is from the infinite excellency of the divine nature, that all our additional obligations originally derive their strength, their energy, their binding power.* The infinite excellency of the divine nature so entirely lays the foundation of its being our duty to love God with all our hearts, that were it not for this, it would cease to be our duty, notwithstanding all other considerations. If he were not, by nature, GOD, it would not be fit that we should love and worship him as God, upon any account whatsoever : He could have no such right to us, or authority over us, as to make it our duty ; nor could he render it our duty, by showing us any kindness whatsoever : Yea, if he were not, by nature, GOD, it would be *wrong* for us to pay him

divine adoration ; it would be *idolatry ;* it would be worshipping one *as God*, who, by nature, is *not God :* And by the same argument which the *orthodox* have been wont to use against the *Arians*, who deny the divinity of Christ....*If he be not a divine person, he ought not to have divine worship paid him ;*—I say, by the same argument, if God were not, by nature, GOD, it could not, upon any account, be our duty to love and worship him as *God.* It is his being, by nature, GOD—his being what he is, and his infinite excellency in being such, which therefore lays the original foundation of all our obligations, and which gives life and energy to all : And, accordingly, we may observe, that the original ground and reason upon which God, as Governor of the world, acts, in making a law that we should *love him with all our hearts*, is, because he is *the Lord ;* as is evident from the tenor of the law itself :—*Thou shalt love the* LORD, &c. *i.e.* because he is the LORD, &c. Yea, it is upon this ground, originally, that God takes it upon him to give all his laws to us ; for this is the constant style.... *Thus and thus shall ye do*, FOR I AM THE LORD.

Those, therefore, who are influenced to love and worship God *not at all*, because he is GOD, but *altogether* from other considerations....not *at all* from a sense of his infinite excellency, but *altogether* on other accounts, are so far from being truly religious, that they are, indeed, guilty of great wickedness in all they do : for although they pretend to love and worship God, yet it is not at all because he is God ;—though they pretend to pay divine adoration to him, yet it is not at all because he is a divine Being : so that when they pretend to pay divine worship and adoration to God, it is merely from some selfish consideration.... from self-love, and for self-ends ;—there is no true regard to God, but all centers in *self* : so that *self*, indeed, is their *idol*, and the only *God* they serve ; and their pretending to love and worship God is mere *mockery.* When they pretend to love and worship God, it is not at all because he is God....not at all from a sense of his divine glory, but only to appease his anger and obtain his favor, or because they consider him as their friend

and benefactor. And now, to come to God and pretend to worship him as if he was God, and yet not to do it at all because he is God, but for mean, and mercenary, and selfish ends, is a very complicated wickedness; and to think to please God in this way, and get into favor by this means, discovers such ignorance and contempt of God, and a frame of heart so full of secret blasphemy, spiritual idolatry, pride and hypocrisy, as cannot easily be expressed: They practically deny his divinity, yet pretend to pay him divine worship: They pretend to serve God, yet really intend only to serve themselves: They make as if they loved God, but only love themselves: Yet so intolerably mean are their thoughts of God, that they expect to please him by all this. To make the best of it, all that religion is mere hypocrisy, which does not primarily take its rise from a sense of the infinite excellency of the divine nature.

Thus, then, we see what is the *first* and *chief motive* of a genuine love to God. He is a Being of infinite understanding, and of almighty power—infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth....and so a Being of infinite glory and excellency....and so infinitely amiable, and infinitely worthy to be loved with all our hearts. And this obligation is binding originally in itself, antecedent to a consideration of any other motive whatsoever: and it is infinitely, eternally, and unchangeably binding, and gives life, and energy, and strength to all other obligations. And hence, if we do love God with all our hearts, we do but our duty, and deserve no thanks; but we are infinitely to blame for the least defect, and can never do any thing to atone for it, but deserve everlasting damnation. And it will always be our duty thus to love God, and the least defect will be always thus blame-worthy, let our circumstances, as to happiness or misery, be what they will. All our hearts will be always due to God, and we shall always stand bound to pay this debt, whether we have any heart for it or no: and God will always appear such an infinite enemy to the least defect, as in his law he has declared himself to be; nor is there any hope of our finding acceptance in his sight, unless it be by a union

to, and interest in, him who has answered all the demands of the law, in the room of those who believe in him. And all pretence of love to God, which does not take its rise from this foundation, is but mere hypocrisy. All these consequences so necessarily follow, from a supposition of the infinite excellency and amiableness of the divine nature, and so evidently, as that, if God be but seen aright, a sense of his infinite beauty will immediately assure the heart that these things are so. A sense of his infinite glory will make us see and feel that we are under infinite obligations to love him with all our hearts, and that we could deserve no thanks for doing so, but that the least defect is infinitely wrong, &c. A sense of the infinite glory of God will effectually establish the heart in these things against all the subtle arguments and fair pretences of heretics. A sense of the infinite glory of God, immediately imparted to the soul by the spirit of God, whereby the heart is thus divinely established in the belief of the truth, is, therefore, that *unction from the holy one*, which all the saints have, whereby they are effectually secured from being finally led away by false teachers ; at least, that *unction* consists partly in this, (I. *John* ii. 20—27,) And at the same time that the people of God are thus established in the belief of these truths, relating to law and duty, from a sense of the infinite glory of God ; I say, at the same time this sense of the infinite glory of God begets a disposition in the heart to conform to this law and do this duty. And thus it is that God *writes his law in our hearts*, and *puts it in our inward parts*, when he intends to *become our God*, and to *make us his people*.... (Heb. viii. 10, 11.) And hence it begins to be the *nature* of the people of God, to love him with all their hearts ; and their views and their temper, and every thing else being thus entirely *new*, hence they are called *new creatures*. *Old things are passed away, and all things are become new.* But now, this sense of the infinite glory of God, which thus lays the very lowest foundation of true religion, is entirely left out of all false religions. And by *this*, true religion stands distinguished, as something specifically different from all the false religions in the world.

And hence we may observe, that it is spoken of in scripture, as something peculiar to true saints, that they *see* God and *know* God. John viii. 19, 55....*Ye neither know me, nor my Father.* John xiv. 19....*The world seeth me no more, but ye see me.* I. John iii. 6....*Whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.* I. John ii. 3....*Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.* I. John iv. 7, 8....*Every one that loveth, knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God.* And the unregenerate, not knowing God....not having a sense of his infinite glory to lay the foundation of their love and of their religion, hence all their love and all their religion entirely take their rise from mere selfish considerations, and nothing but self-love lies at bottom. And hence it is natural for unregenerate men to think they deserve something for their duties, and as natural to be insensible of the infinite evil of their sins: And so it is their nature to magnify and be proud of their own goodness, and to extenuate and be unhumbled for their badness. And from hence results our native aversion to *faith* and *repentance*, and contrariety to the *gospel-way of salvation.* And now *new gospels*, *new sorts of faith* and *repentance* are coined, *new* notions of religion contrived, to suit the depraved temper and vitiated taste of unhumbled, impenitent sinners, who are concerned to secure their own interest, but care not what becomes of God's honor. Hence errors take their rise, and professing christians are divided into parties, and one runs this way, and another that, and all hope to get to heaven at last. And now, at length, after so great a variety of inferences and remarks, and so large a consideration of the first and chief motive of a genuine love to God, I proceed,

2. To take a short view of *the additional obligations which we lie under*, to love God with all our hearts. I AM THE LORD, (this lays the first foundation, and leads the way, when from *Mount Sinai* the Almighty proclaims his law, but then he immediately goes on to add,) THY GOD, *which brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage*....Exod. xx. God has such a right to us, and such an authority over us, and has

done so many things for us, and promised so many things to us, that our additional obligations to be the Lord's, to love him and live to him, are exceedingly great. Particularly,

Nothing is more reasonable than that we should be *entirely dedicated* to that God, whose we are *originally*, and by an *entire*, *underived*, and *unalienable* right: especially, considering what he is in himself, and that he is Lord of all things, and, by nature, God most high: Indeed, if our Creator was not, by nature, the most high God, then he could not be the supreme Lord of all things; for there would be one above him; and so we should not be his, entirely and absolutely; for he himself, and we his creatures, would belong, originally, to another...even to him that, by nature, would be the most high God; and him we ought to love and worship. But our Creator himself, being absolutely the first, and absolutely supreme, self-existent, and independent, the sole author and Lord of all things, as well as infinitely glorious in himself, his right to us is original, underived, and most absolute and entire: and therefore it is infinitely fit and suitable that we should be, in the constant frame and disposition of our hearts, absolutely, entirely, and wholly the Lord's, and that we should forever exert all our powers, to the very utmost, to promote his honor and interest. And it is infinitely unreasonable that we should ever set up ourselves, and be attached to any interest of our own, separate from his. And, inasmuch as he is infinitely better than we are, (yea, *all the nations of the earth are less than nothing before him*,) and has such an entire right unto us, his interest, therefore, should be regarded as more valuable than our own....yea, infinitely more: For if our own interest appears as valuable to us as his, we set ourselves upon a level with him, and claim as great a right to ourselves as he has; and if his interest does not appear as being of infinitely greater value to us than our own, we do not esteem him as being infinitely better than we are ourselves, and his right to us infinitely greater than our own right to ourselves is. It is, therefore, infinitely reasonable, since God is what he is, and has such a right to us as he has, that we should be constantly, from the very

bottom of our hearts, wholly his, and every moment live wholly to him, and always have his interest lie most near our hearts, as being of infinitely more worth, value, and importance than our own: As Moses, who, in a measure, was made partaker of this divine nature, in the anguish of his heart, cries, when God tells him he will cut off Israel, and make of him a great nation, "Lord, let my name be *blotted out of thy book;* let it be forgot-"ten from among the living, and be never heard of again in "the world that ever I was in being: *But what will become of* "*thy great name?*"—God's honor and interest were dear to him; but he, comparatively, cared not for his own *at all*....Exod. xxxii.—Num. xiv.

But this our obligation to be entirely the Lord's, is still infinitely increased, if we consider the *authority* of the supreme *Governor* of the world, which, by his express *law*, has enjoined this upon us. It is not only infinitely fit, in its own nature, that we should love God with all our hearts, considering what he is in himself, and that we should be entirely for him, in the temper of our minds, considering what an entire right he has to us as his creatures, who have received all we have from him, and are absolutely dependant on him for all we want; but God has, by *law*, as *Governor* of the world, enjoined this upon us as our duty, and that with all his *authority:* And now, considering what he is in himself, and the *natural right* he has to all things, and how entirely we are his, and absolutely under his government, his AUTHORITY is infinitely binding; especially, considering how *infinitely engaged* he appears to be to see that his law be *exactly* obeyed, in promising eternal life on the one hand, and threatening eternal damnation on the other: This his *infinite engagedness*, lays us under infinite bonds to be and do *exactly* what he requires.

But still, our obligation to love him with all our hearts, and be wholly the Lord's, is yet infinitely more increased, if we consider what ways the Lord has taken with us in this apostate world, since our rebellion against him...since we have lost all esteem for him, turned enemies to him, cast off his authority, and

practically bid defiance to his power and justice: for, instead of immediately dooming all this lower world to blackness of darkness forever, he has sent his Son, his only begotten Son, from heaven, to bring us the news of pardon and peace, and, by his own death, to open a way for our return unto him, and to call and invite us to return: And now, with a liberal hand, he strews common mercies all round the world, among evil, unthankful, guilty, hell-deserving rebels, and fills the hearts of all with food and gladness; and sends forth his messengers to proclaim it to the ends of the earth, that it is his will that all his rebellious creatures lay down their weapons of rebellion—acknowledge the law, by which they stand condemned, to be holy, just, and good, and look to him through Jesus Christ for pardon as a free gift, and through Jesus Christ return unto him, and give up themselves to him entirely, to love him and live to him, and delight in him forever.

And while the world in general make light of all this, and go to their farms, and to their merchandize, and many are enraged and cry out against the messengers of peace, and stone some and kill others (*Mat.* xxii.)—that *now* he should, of his own sovereign good pleasure, according to his eternal purpose, seize here and there one, by his all-conquering grace, and stop them in their career to hell, and make them see and feel their sin and guilt, and own the sentence just by which they stand condemned, and bring them as upon their knees to look to free grace through Jesus Christ for a pardon, and through Jesus Christ to give up themselves forever to him—that *now* he should receive them to favor, and put them among his children, and become their father and their God, in an everlasting covenant, and undertake to teach and lead...to quicken and strengthen...to correct and comfort, and so to humble, and purify, and sanctify, and fit them for his heavenly kingdom; and, while they are in this world, to give them all things that are best for them, and make all things work together for their good, and finally bring them unto, and possess them of eternal glory and blessedness, in the full enjoyment of himself forever;—for a God of *infinite*

greatness and *glory* to deal *just so*, with *just such creatures*, is the most amazing and astonishing grace; and lays *infinite bonds* upon believers to love the Lord their God with all their hearts, and to live to him forever, and has the greatest tendency to animate them so to do: And thus, by these brief hints, we have a general view of the additional motives of a true and genuine love to God.

As God's bringing up the children of Israel out of Egypt—leading them through the wilderness—driving out the heathen from before them, and giving them that good land which flowed with milk and honey, and covenanting to be their God, is used so frequently, by Moses and the Prophets, throughout all the Old Testament, as a motive to engage them to cleave to the Lord, and to him only and entirely, and forever; so God's sending his Son into the world, to save his people from their sins, their spiritual bondage, together with all the spiritual and everlasting blessings of the covenant of grace, are continually used in the New Testament, as arguments to engage believers not to live to themselves, but to him that died for them.—Only here let these things be remembered:

(1.) That a sight and sense of the infinite *greatness* and *glory* of GOD, from whom all good comes, and a sense of their own infinite meanness and unworthiness, makes all the mercies they receive, infinitely the more *endearing* and *engaging*: for the *mercies themselves* now appear unspeakably the *greater*, in that they come from *such a God*, and *to such creatures*; and the *infinite goodness* of God shines the *brighter* in every mercy, and the *freeness* of his *grace* is the *more* conspicuous, on account of which he is infinitely amiable. The infinite greatness and glory of God, in *general*, ravishes the heart—the infinite moral beauty of the divine goodness and grace, in *particular*, ravishes the heart; and now, that *such a God* should shew *such kindnesses* to *such a creature*, is very affecting. *Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* says holy David ....*And is this the manner of men, O Lord God?* No surely.... *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: For there is none like*

thee, neither is there any God besides thee....II. Sam. vii. 18—22. God is loved for the kindnesses bestowed ; but he is *more* loved for the infinite beauty of that goodness which is displayed in the bestowment of them, and for his being altogether such a one as he is. So the *Queen* of *Sheba* esteemed *Solomon* for the kindnesses he shewed her, but primarily, and much more, for his own personal excellencies : And his personal excellencies made her esteem his favors to her of much greater worth. That a *glorious* and *ever-blessed* GOD should treat sinners so, is infinitely endearing. Now these sensations, which a true believer has, and his love to God arising therefrom, must be vastly different from every thing which natural men experience, who know not God, and have no higher principle in them than self-love.

(2.) Let it also be remembered, that God *designs*, by all his dealings and kindnesses to his people, to bring them *nearer to himself* in this world, and to the *everlasting enjoyment of himself* in the world to come. He means, for the present, to humble them, and wean them from the world....to make them more spiritually and heavenly-minded....to bring them to be more acquainted with God, and more entirely to take up their rest and contentment in him ; and, therefore, all things are calculated, by his infinite wisdom and goodness, to attain this end. And this causes all the wise and kind dealings of God, outwardly in his providence, and inwardly by his spirit, and that both by way of correction, as well as by way of consolation, to appear in a very affecting and engaging light to true believers. While they see what God is in himself, and his infinite beauty in being such....while they see how infinitely sufficient he is to be all things to them, and to do all things for them, and the blessedness of living wholly upon him, and trusting wholly in him....while they see God calculating all things to bring them to him, and actually find all things working this way, their obligations to love him and live to him appear infinitely binding, and their hearts are mightily engaged and animated. This view of things makes all their afflictions appear as great mercies ; because they are so wisely calculated to bring them near to God : *Psalm* cxix. 71.

This view of things adds an infinite value to all the kindnesses of God, over and above what they are worth merely in themselves, because they are all so wisely calculated to bring them near to God. This is the kernel of all that tender mercy and loving kindness which they see in all their afflictions, and in all their comforts: *Heb.* xii. 10, 11—*Rom.* viii. 28. To be brought near to God, is worth more than all the world;—there is no portion like God....no comfort like that which is to be taken in him: He is the godly man's ALL. Psalm lxxiii. 25....*Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing on earth I desire besides thee.* And now that such a *God* should take *such methods*, with *just such a creature*, to bring him to the possession of *such a good*, is the most amazing goodness, and the most astonishing grace. Now here is a sense of the excellency of the divine nature in *general*, and a sense of the moral beauty of the divine goodness in *particular*, and of the *unspeakable mercy* God shews to them, which *mercy* is *infinitely magnified* in their account, from the *value* they have for God, as the *portion* of their souls, from all which their love to God takes its rise; whereby their love appears to be exceedingly different from any thing which natural men experience, who neither know God, nor relish communion with him, but are contrary to him in all things; and, only from self-love, are glad of the good things they receive from God, which good things they live upon and make a God of—whether they be worldly good things, or great light, and comfort, and joy of a religious nature.

(3.) Let it also be remembered, that all God's gifts to his people are so many talents bestowed upon them, *ultimately to be improved for God*, whereby they are put under *advantages to glorify God and do good in the world:* And the more they have of worldly substance...of natural powers...of acquired accomplishments, and of the gracious influences of the holy spirit, &c. the greater are their advantages to act for God, to promote his honor and interest, and to do good. Now, in proportion as they love God, in the same proportion is his honor and interest, and the good and welfare of his creatures and subjects, dear unto

them. The interest and honor of God lie nearer to the hearts of his people, than their parents, or consorts, or children, or houses and lands—yea, than their own lives ; (*Luke* xiv. 26.) To be under advantages, therefore, to promote his honor and interest, must, in their account, be esteemed an inestimable privilege. Hence, they love God for all things they receive from him, *because* by all they are put under such advantages to live to him and serve him, seeking his interest, and honor, and glory ; a remarkable instance of which we have in *Ezra*, that hearty friend to God, and to his honor and interest....See *Ezra* vii. 27, 28, compared with the rest of the *chapter*. Now herein, again, their love to God for his benefits is evidently different from any thing which natural men experience, who have no higher principle than self-love, and are entirely actuated by it.

And as the love of the saint and of the hypocrite thus greatly differ in their *nature*, so do they also differ as greatly in their *fruits* and *effects*. Ezra loved God greatly for his kindnesses to him, because thereby he was put under advantages to do so much for God's glory, and for the good of his people. And now see how active he is for God, and how he exerts himself to do good, and to reform every thing that was amiss among the Jews, from the *eighth chapter* and on ; while the hypocritical Jews, who, no doubt, were also greatly affected with the mercy of God, in their deliverance from their long captivity, were so far from being active for God, that they, not caring for his honor or his laws, committed great abominations....*Ezra* ix. 1. So the *children of Israel*, at the Red-Sea, seemed to be full of love to God, as well as *Moses ;* but as they had different sorts of love, so their carriage did as greatly differ afterwards, for the course of forty years : and no wonder....for the hypocritical *Israelites* only loved themselves, and cared only for their own interest ; but *Moses* loved God, and cared, above all things, for his honor.

Thus we see, not only what additional obligations believers are under to love God with all their hearts, but also how, and in what manner, they influence and excite them so to do : and what I have offered effectually obviates the common plea of

formalists and all self-seekers, *That all the saints in scripture are represented as loving God for his benefits;* whence they argue, that they are right, and their religion genuine, which results merely from self-love, and the fear of hell, and hope of heaven, or from a confident persuasion that their sins are pardoned: For it is evident, that true saints do not love God for his benefits, nor eye their own happiness, in the same manner that such men do; but in a manner altogether different. Saints know the God they love, and love him, primarily, for what he is in himself, and because he is just what he is: But hypocrites know not God, nor love him; but are, in all things, contrary to him, and are only pleased with the false image of God they have framed in their fancies, merely because they think that he loves them, and has done, and will do, great things for them. Saints are affected with the divine goodness itself, for the moral beauty there is in it; but hypocrites are affected only with the fruits and effects of divine goodness to them, as tending to make them happy. Saints love God for his benefits, under a real sense of their infinite unworthiness of the least of them; but so it is not with hypocrites. Saints love God for all the streams of divine goodness, because they are designed, and actually do lead them up to God, the fountain, who is the portion of their souls: But hypocrites live upon the streams, disrelishing the fountain. Saints love God, dearly, for all his gifts, because by them they are put under such advantages to live to God, to promote his interest and honor, and to do good in the world; but hypocrites are confined within the narrow circle, *self*. The love of saints to God animates them to live to God, and to exert themselves to promote his honor and interest, and to do all the good they can: but the hypocrite, after all his pretended love to God, cares not what becomes of his interest and honor, if it may but go well with him, his friends and party: So that, while true saints love God for his benefits, they act, in a *gracious* manner, conformable to the law of God, and to the reason and nature of things; whereas, all the love of the most refined hypocrite is merely the workings of a natural self-love, in a manner directly contra-

ry to the law of God, and to the reason and nature of things; and is nothing but mere mockery....*Psalm* lxxviii. 34, 35, 36, 37—*Zech.* vii. 5, 6.

Thus we have gone through the two first *general heads*, and see *what is implied in love to God*, and *from what motives we ought to love him:* And, from the whole, we may learn so much of the nature of true religion, as that, with much evidence and certainty, we may conclude,

First, *That all that seeming love to God is counterfeit, which arises merely from men's corruptions being gratified:* As when ambitious men are, by God's providence, raised to high degrees of honor, and worldly men are prospered in all which they put their hands unto, and herefrom the one and the other rejoice and bless God, and seem to love him, and verily think they are sincere: This is all hypocrisy; for, in truth, they only love their corruptions, and are glad they are gratified. And accordingly, instead of improving all their riches and honor for God, to advance his interest and honor in the world, they improve all only for themselves, to promote their own ends; and care not what becomes of God's honor, and interest, and kingdom; and commonly such men shew themselves the greatest enemies to the cause of God, and to the religion of Christ: and should God but *touch all they have, they would curse him to his face.*

Secondly, We may be equally certain, *that all that seeming love to God is counterfeit, that arises merely from a legal, self-righteous spirit:* As when a man, only because he is afraid of hell, and has a mind to be saved, sets himself to repent, and reform, and do duties, and tries to love God and aim at his glory, to the intent that he may make some amends for past sins and recommend himself to the divine favor, and so to escape hell and obtain heaven: And when he has grown so good, as to have raised hopes of attaining his end, he is ravished at the thoughts, and rejoices, and blesses the Lord, and loves him. It is plain all this is hypocrisy: for the man, in truth, only loves himself, and is concerned merely for his own interest; but does not care at all for God, his glory or honor: for, if there

were no heaven nor hell, such would serve God no more. Children will work for their parents, without being hired, because they love them: but hirelings will not strike a stroke if there is no money to be gotten; because they care for nothing but their own interest: Hence this sort of hypocrites are wont to say, that if they once believed that God had made no promises to the best they can do, they would never do more. And farther, it is plainly all hypocrisy; for, if their consciences but fall asleep, so that they are troubled no more with the thoughts of another world, they will leave off their duties, let down their watch, break all their resolutions, and be as bad as ever: and hence their doctrine of falling from grace probably took its rise. And their hypocrisy is still more evident, in that they are commonly so much concerned to find out what the least measure of saving grace is, and so strenuous in pleading for great abatements in the law: for, from hence, it is plain, that all they are after is only to get just grace enough to carry them to heaven; as a lazy hireling, who is for doing but only just work enough to pass for a day's work, that he may get his wages at night, which is all he wants.

THIRDLY, We may be as certain, *that all that seeming love is counterfeit, which arises merely from a strong confidence which a man has, that his sins are pardoned, and that Christ loves him, and will save him:* As when a man is under great terrors, and has fearful apprehensions of hell and damnation, and is ready even to give himself up for lost: but suddenly great light breaks into his mind; he sees Christ with his arms open and smiling, and it may be his blood running, and hears him, as it were, say, *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee....I have loved thee with an everlasting love....Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom;*—and now he is certain that his sins are pardoned, and that heaven is his, and he is even ravished with joy, and calls upon all to praise the Lord: For all this proceeds merely from self-love, and there is no love to God in it: for all this love arises from his false confidence, and not from any true knowledge of God; and commonly such turn out as the Israel-

ites did, *who sang God's praise* at the Red-Sea, when Pharaoh and his hosts were drowned, and they delivered, and their hopes of getting to Canaan highly raised; but *they soon forgat his works*, and rebelled against him, and their carcases fell in the wilderness. They loved *themselves*, and therefore they rejoiced at their wonderful deliverance; they loved *themselves*, and therefore they murmured three days after, when they came to the bitter waters: Their joys and their murmurings proceeded from the very same principle, under different circumstances; but the love of God was not in them: and just this is the case here. And this is commonly the event, that, the fears of hell being now over, their joys gradually abate, and they grow more and more secure, till, after a while, they return to folly, as the dog to his vomit, and as the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire; and so are as bad, and sometimes worse than ever....(II. *Pet.* ii. 20, 21, 22.) And now they plead, that the best are dead sometimes, and that David and Peter had their falls; and so keep their consciences as quiet as they can: and thus they live along whole months and years together.

FOURTHLY, and lastly, We may also be certain, *that all that seeming love to God, which arises merely from the gratification of spiritual pride, is counterfeit:* As when men dream dreams, see visions, and hear voices, and have impressions and revelations whereby they are set up in their own esteem, and in the opinion of others, for some of the most peculiar favorites of heaven, and very best men in all the world; and hence they rejoice, and bless God and mightily love him: but, in truth, they are only ravished with self-conceit, and feel blessedly to think themselves some of the best men in the world, and to think they shall shortly sit at the right hand of Christ in heaven, among the apostles and martyrs, while their persecutors and haters will be burning in hell: but they neither know God nor love him; and, for the most part, by heretical doctrines, or wicked lives, or both, are a scandal to religion: These are so far from being truly religious, that *they are the very tares which the devil sows*....Mat. xiii. 39.

In each of these sorts of love there are these three defects or faults :—(1.) They have no true *knowledge* of God ; and so (2.) they only love *themselves ;* and (3.) their seeming love to God arises from a *mistake.* The ambitious and worldly man thinks himself very happy, because he rises in honor and estate ; the legalist thinks that God loves him, and will save him for his duties ; the next firmly believes that his sins are pardoned ; and the last, that God looks upon him one of the best men in the world : but all are wofully mistaken ; and when, at the day of judgment, they come to see their mistake, their love to God will vanish away, and they turn everlasting haters and blasphemers of the most High. And another defect in these and all other sorts of counterfeit love, is, that they none of them will ever make men *truly obedient :* for when men's seeming to love God is nothing but self-love in another shape, all their seeming obedience will, in reality, be nothing but self-seeking: They may pretend to be the servants of God, but will only mean, ultimately, to serve themselves.

SECTION III.

CONCERNING THE MEASURE OF LOVE TO GOD REQUIRED IN THE DIVINE LAW.

I proceed now to the next thing proposed, which was,

III. To show *what is that* measure *of love to God, which the law requires of all mankind.*—And our blessed Savior clears up this point in the most plain and familiar language :—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ;* and it is added, in *Mark* xii. 30, *With all thy strength ;* i. e. in other words, we ought to love God in a measure exactly proportionable to the largeness of our natural powers and faculties ; which to do, is all that perfection which God ever required of any of his creatures.*

* The law runs thus : *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with* ALL *thy heart,* &c. *and thy neighbor* AS *thyself.* God is to have the *highest degree* of love we are capable of ; but a *much less* degree is due to ourselves and neighbors : So that, according to the tenor of the law, our love to God is to be *greater* and *more fervent,* than our love to ourselves. And therefore the law does suppose that God is worthy of our supreme love for what he is

When the law requires us to love God *with all our hearts*, it either means, to the utmost extent of our *natural* capacity, or else only to the utmost extent of our *moral* capacity ; *i. e.* only so much as we are *inclined* to : And then the less we are inclined to love God, the less love is required ; and so, if we have no heart, no inclination to love him, then no love at all is required : And, according to this rule, the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is not *in duty bound* to be subject to the law, neither indeed can be : And where there is no law, there is no transgression ;—where there is no duty required, there can be no sin committed : and so the vilest of mortals are the freest from sin, and the least to blame ; which is the grossest absurdity. When, therefore, the law requires us to love God with *all our hearts*, it has no reference to our *moral inclination*, but only to our *natural capacity :* And indeed nothing can be more unreasonable, than to suppose that the law only requires us to love God so far as we have a heart and disposition to do so ; for this would leave us entirely at liberty to do otherwise, if we were so inclined, and, in effect, it would make the law say, *If you feel inclined to love God, more or less, so far it is your duty, but farther you are not bound, but are at your liberty ;* i. e. the law is not binding, any farther than you are inclined to obey it ; *i. e.* in reality it is *no law*, but every man is left to do as he pleases : The *whole heart*, therefore, does the law mean to require, let our temper, inclination, or disposition be what it will.

God, the great author of all things, has been pleased to create intelligent beings of *different* sizes, some of a higher rank, and some of a lower—some of greater capacities, and some of less....

in himself, antecedent to any selfish consideration, from a sight and sense of which *worthiness* our love to God is primarily to take its rise : For, in the nature of things, it would be impossible for us, from self-love, to love God *more* than ourselves....Or thus, the law requires us to love God *more* than ourselves ; but, in the nature of things, it is impossible that merely from self-love we should love God more than ourselves : therefore the law supposes that there is something in God to excite our love, antecedent to any selfish consideration, and that our love to him is not to proceed merely from self-love : For, otherwise, the law requires us to do that which in its own nature is absolutely impossible....And this, by the way, may serve still farther to confirm the truth of what has been before said.

some are angels, and some are men ; and among the angels some are of larger natural powers, and some of smaller. So it is among the good angels, and so it is among the evil angels : There are angels and arch-angels, i. e. beings of various natural powers and capacities, among the good and bad : And so it is among men—among good and bad, there is a very great variety—some have larger souls than others.

Intelligent beings are capable of a *degree* of knowledge and love, exactly *proportionable* to their *natural* powers. Angels are capable of a degree of knowledge and love, greater than men, and one man of a greater degree than another. As they are of different sizes....of larger and smaller natural powers, so their capacities to know and love are some greater, and some less : So it is among good and bad.

All that *perfection* which God requires of any of his creatures, is a measure of knowledge and love bearing an *exact proportion* to their *natural* abilities. Since God has manifested what he is, in his works and ways, and since he is infinitely glorious in being what he is, and has an original and entire right to his intelligent creatures ; therefore he requires all angels and men to attend diligently to the discoveries which he has made of himself, and learn what he is, and behold his glory, and love him with all their hearts : This is the extent of what God requires of the highest angel in heaven, and this is exactly what he requires of all the children of men upon earth.

The law requires *no more* than this of mankind, under a notion that their natural powers are lessened by the fall. Whether we are beings of as large natural powers as we should have been, had we never apostatized from God, or no, yet this is plain, we are no where in scripture blamed for having no larger natural powers, nor is any more ever required than *all the heart*, and *all the soul*, and *all the mind*, and *all the strength* : This is evident through the whole Bible.

And the law requires *no less* of mankind, under a notion that they are turned enemies to God, and have no heart or inclination to love him. Be it so, that mankind are ever so averse to attend to

those manifestations which God has made of himself, and ever so averse to take in right notions of God, and ever so far from a disposition to account him infinitely glorious in being what he is, and from an inclination to love him with all their hearts; yet the divine law makes no allowances....no abatements; but insists upon the same...the very same it ever did :—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.*

Indeed, some do dream that the law is very much abated: But what saith the scriptures as to this point? Does the word of God teach us that there is any abatement made? Where do we read it? Where is it plainly asserted, or in what texts is it implied? Truly, I know nothing like it in all the Bible, nor what text of scripture this notion can be built upon: and besides, if the law is abated, *when* was is abated? Was it abated immediately upon Adam's fall? Surely no; for, above two thousand years after, from Mount Sinai, God declared that he required sinless perfection, and threatened a curse against the man that should fail in the least point....*Exod.* xx.—*Deut.* xxvii. 26.—Was it abated upon Christ's coming into the world? Surely no; for he, in the strongest terms, taught his disciples that it was in full force, and that it was their duty to be perfectly holy, and that in designed opposition to the doctrine of the Pharisees, who, in effect, held that the law was abated....*Mat.* v. 17—48. Was it abated after Christ's death and resurrection? Surely no; for St. Paul always taught that the Christian scheme of religion, which he preached, did not make void, but rather established the law....*Rom.* iii. 31—and St. James insisted upon it, that it must not be broken in any one point....*James* ii. 10.—When was it abated therefore? Why, says Christ, *Till heaven and earth shall pass away, one jot or tittle of the law shall in no wise fail*....Mat. v. 18. And besides, if the law is abated, *in what particular* is it abated, and *how great* are the abatements? —Are there any abatements made in our duty to God? Surely no; for we are still required to love him with all our hearts, and more than this never was demanded: Or are any abatements made in our duty to our fellow-men? Surely no; for we

are still required to love our neighbor as ourselves, and more than this never was enjoined : Or is there any abatement made in the internal part of our duty ? Surely no ; for the whole heart is still required, and more than this never was insisted upon : Or, finally, is there any abatement made in the external part of our duty ? Surely no ; for we are still required to be *holy in all manner of conversation, as he that has called us is holy*, (I. Pet. i. 15.) and more than this was never required : So that, from the whole, we have as much reason to think that the law requires sinless perfection *now*, as that *ever* it did : yea, this point cannot be plainer than it is ; for the law, in fact, is the very same it was from the beginning, word for word, without the leat alteration :—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c. *and thy neighbor as thyself;* so that, if it *ever* did require sinless perfection, it does *now*.

The highest pitch of holiness, the saints in *heaven* will ever arrive to, will only be to love God with *all* their hearts ; and exactly the very same is required of every man upon *earth :* And it was because St. Paul understood the law in this sense, that he had always such a mean and low opinion of all his attainments ; for, while he compared what he *was*, with what he *ought to be*, he plainly saw how the case stood : and therefore he says, *The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.... O wretched man that I am !*...Rom. vii. 14, 24.

So that, upon the whole, this seems to be the true state of the case :—as there are various capacities among all intelligent creatures in general, so there are among men, in particular, souls of various sizes....some of larger natural capacities, and some of smaller ; but souls of different capacities, are capable of different degrees of love. A degree of love exactly equal to the natural capacity of the soul, is perfection : and this is what the law requires, nor more nor less;—*all* the heart, *all* the soul, *all* the mind, *all* the strength. The saints and angels in heaven love God thus, and hence they are perfect in holiness ; and, so far as we fall short of this, we are sinful : This is the exact rule of duty. And now, this law is *holy*, *just*, and *good*. The thing required

quired, is, in its own nature, right, fit, and suitable. God is worthy to be loved with all our hearts, and this is just what is required. It is right we should have a degree of love to ourselves, and it is right we should love our neighbors *as ourselves;* but it is fit we should love God with *all our hearts:* Considering what he is, and what we are, it is, in its own nature, infinitely fit and right; and not to do so, infinitely unfit and wrong. Indeed, God is worthy of an infinitely greater degree of love than we, or any of his creatures, are capable of. He only is capable of a complete view of his own infinite glory, and of a full sense of his own infinite beauty, and of a love perfectly adequate to his own loveliness: and he does not require or expect any of his creatures to love him to that degree he loves himself; only, as he loves himself with *all his* heart, so he requires and expects that they love him with *all their* hearts: And there being the same reason for one as for the other, the law is, therefore, in its own nature, perfectly *right*, and *just*, and *equal.* Indeed, had God required the most exalted of his intelligent creatures to have loved him in the same *degree* that he himself does, then the thing required would, in its own nature, have been absolutely impossible, and what he could have no reason to expect: Or, if he had required the meanest of his intelligent creatures to have loved him in the same *degree* that *Gabriel* does, it would have been a thing *naturally* impossible; but now he only requires every one to love him with *all their hearts*, this is *right*....perfectly *right, just*, and *equal.* Less than this could not, in justice, have been required of each one; in justice, I mean, to the Deity, who ought to have his due from each one, and whose proper right the Governor of the world ought to assert and maintain.

Thus we see the law is exactly upon a level with our *natural* capacities; it *only* requires us to love God with *all* our hearts: and thus we see, that the law is, therefore, perfectly reasonable, just, and equal. Deut. x. 12....*And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with* ALL *thy heart, and with* ALL *thy soul?*

Hence, as to a *natural* capacity, all mankind are *capable* of a perfect conformity to this law; for the law requires of no man any more than to love God with *all his heart*. The sinning angels have the same *natural* capacities now, as they had before they fell; they have the same *faculties*, called the *understanding* and *will*—they are still the same beings, as to their *natural* powers. Once they loved God with *all their hearts;* and now they hate him with *all their hearts:* Once they had a great degree of love; now they have as great a degree of hatred;—so that they have the same natural capacities now as ever. Their *temper*, indeed, is different; but their *capacity* is the same; and, therefore, as to a *natural capacity*, they are as *capable* of a perfect conformity to the law of their Creator as ever they were. So, Adam, after his fall, had the same soul that he had before, as to its *natural capacities*, though of a very different *temper;* and, therefore, in that respect, was as *capable* of a perfect conformity to this law, as ever. And it is plainly the case, that all mankind, as to their *natural* capacities, are *capable* of a perfect conformity to the law, from *this*, that when sinners are converted they have no new *natural* faculties, though they have a *new temper:* and when they come to love God with all their hearts in heaven, still they will have the *same hearts*, as to their *natural* faculties, and may, in this respect, be justly looked upon as the very same beings. In this sense, Paul was the same man when he hated and persecuted Christ, as when he loved him and died for him: and that *same heart* that was once so full of malice, is now as full of love: So that, as to his *natural* capacities, he was as *capable* of a perfect conformity to this law, when he was a persecutor, as he is now in heaven. When, therefore, men cry out against the holy law of God, which requires us only to love him with *all our hearts*, and say, "It is not *just* for God "to *require* more than we *can* do, and then threaten to damn "us for not doing," they ought to stay a while, and consider what they say, and tell what they mean by their CAN DO; for it is plain, that the law is exactly upon a level with our *natural* capacities, and that, in this respect, we are *fully capable* of a per-

fect conformity thereto: And it will be impossible for us to excuse ourselves by an *inability* arising from *any other* quarter; as will presently appear: For, to return,

From what has been said, we may learn, that there can be nothing to render it, in any measure, a *hard* and *difficult* thing, to love God with all our hearts, but our being destitute of a *right temper* of mind, and having a *temper* that is *wrong*: and that, therefore, we are *perfectly inexcusable*, and *altogether* and *wholly* to *blame*, that we do not.

OBJ. *But I do not know God; how, therefore, can I love him?*

ANS. Were you of a *right temper*, it would be your *nature*, above all things, to attend to those discoveries which he has made of himself in his works and in his word; you would search for the knowledge of him, as men search for silver, and as they dig for hidden treasure: and, were you of a *right temper*, it would be *natural* to take in that very representation which God has made of himself: And now, was it but your nature to attend, with all your heart, to the discoveries which God has made of himself...and your nature to take in right notions of him, it would be impossible but that you should know *what God is*; because he has *acted out* all his perfections so much to the life, and *exhibited* such an *exact* image of himself. The works of creation and redemption, and all his conduct as moral Governor of the world, shew just what kind of Being he is: He has discovered his infinite understanding and almighty power, and he has shown the temper of his heart; and all in so plain a manner, that, were it your nature to attend and consider, and take in right notions, it is quite impossible but that you should know and see plainly *what God is*.

OBJ. *But if I have right notions of what God is, yet I cannot see his glory and beauty in being such; how, therefore, can I love him?*

ANS. Were you of a *right temper*, it would be your *nature* to account him infinitely glorious in being what he is. As it is the nature of an ambitious man to see a glory in applause, and of a worldly man to see a glory in the things of the world, so it

would be your nature to see a glory in God ; for what suits our hearts, naturally appears excellent in our eyes. (*John* viii. 42,47.)

OBJ. *But I feel that I cannot love him ; how, therefore, am I wholly to blame ?*

ANS. The fault is in him, or in you : Either he is not lovely, or else you are of a very bad temper : but he is infinitely lovely ; and therefore it is only owing to the bad temper of your heart, and to your being destitute of a right temper, that you cannot love him ; and you, therefore, are wholly to blame : Indeed you could not but love him, were you not a very sordid wretch.

OBJ. *But to love God, or to have any dispositon to love him, is a thing* SUPERNATURAL, *clean beyond the powers of nature, improved to the utmost : how can I, therefore, be wholly to blame ?*

ANS. It is a thing *supernatural* you say ; *i. e.* in other words, you have *no heart to it*, nor the least inclination that way ; nor is there any thing in your temper to work upon by motives to bring you to it ; and now, because you are so very bad a creature, therefore you are not at all to blame : This is your argument : But can you think that there is any force in it ? What ! are moral agents the less to blame the worse they grow ? And are God's laws no longer binding, than while his subjects are disposed to obey them ?

OBJ. *But, after all, I must needs reply, as* Nicodemus *in another case*, How can these things be ?

ANS. Why did not the Jews love their prophets, and love Christ and his apotles ? What was it owing to ? And where did the blame lie ? They were acquainted with them....heard them talk and preach, and saw their conduct, and could not but plainly perceive their temper, and know what sort of disposition they were of, and what sort of men they were ; and yet they did not like them ; but they hated them—they belied them, slandered and reproached them, and put them to death : And now what was the matter ? What was the cause of all this ? Were not their prophets, and Christ and his apostles indeed lovely, and worthy of their hearty esteem ? Did not all that they said and did

manifest them to be so? Why, then, did they not love them? —Was it not wholly owing to their not having a right temper of mind, and to their being of so bad a disposition? And were they not wholly to blame?—They might say of Christ, *That they could see no form nor comeliness in him, wherefore they shuld desire him;* and where no *beauty* is seen, it is impossible there should be any *love:* But why did not he appear most amiable in their eyes? And why were their hearts not ravished with his beauty?—His *disciples* loved him, and *Martha* and *Mary* and *Lazarus* loved him; and why did not the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* love him as much?—Why, because his person and doctrines did not suit them, and were not agreeable to the *temper* of their hearts. The bad temper of their hearts made him appear odious in their eyes, and was the cause of all their ill-will towards him: And now, were they not to *blame* for this bad temper, and for all their bad feelings, and bad carriage towards Christ, thence arising? Yes, surely, if ever any men were to blame for any thing. And now, if God, the father, had been in the same circumstances as God, the son, was then in, he would not have been loved a jot more, or treated a whit better than he was: Indeed it was that image and resemblance of the infinitely glorious and blessed God, which was to be seen in their prophets—in Christ and his apostles, which was the very thing they hated him for: Therefore Christ says, *He that hateth me, hateth my Father also....But now have they both seen and hated, both me and my Father*....John xv. 23, 24. And Christ attributes it entirely to their want of a right temper, and to the bad disposition of their hearts, that they did not love him, and love his doctrines. *If God were your father, you would love me*.... John viii. 42. *He that is of God* (of a God-like temper) *heareth God's words: ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God*, (Ver. 47.) In truth, the bottom of all your enmity is, *that you are of your father, the devil*, i. e. of just such a temper as he, (*Ver.* 44.) And now, what think you, when Christ comes in flaming fire, to take vengeance on an ungodly world? Will he blame the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* for not loving him with all their

hearts, or no? Or will he excuse the matter, and say, on their behalf, *They could see no form nor comeliness in me....I appeared very odious to them....they could not love me....they could not but hate me, and no man is to blame for not doing more than he* CAN?

From the whole, it is plain that mankind are to blame, wholly to blame, and perfectly inexcusable, for their not having right apprehensions of God, and for their not having a sense of his glory in being what he is, and for their not loving him with all their heart; because all is owing merely to their want of a right temper, and to the bad disposition of their hearts.

Indeed, if we were altogether of such a temper, frame, and disposition of heart as we ought to be, it would be altogether as easy and natural to love God with all our hearts, as it is for the most dutiful child to love a tender and valuable parent: For God is really infinitely amiable; and were we of such a temper, he would appear so in our eyes; and did he appear so in our eyes, we could not but love him with all our hearts, and delight in him with all our souls; and it would be most easy and natural so to do; for no man ever found any difficulty in loving that which appears very amiable in his eyes: For the proof of which I appeal to the experience of all mankind. And now, why does not God appear infinitely amiable in our eyes? Is it because he has not clearly revealed *what he is*, in his works and in his word? Surely no; for the revelation is plain enough. Is it because he is not infinitely amiable in being what he is? Surely no; for all heaven are ravished with his infinite beauty. What is it, then, that makes us blind to the infinite excellency of the divine nature? Why, it can be owing to nothing but a bad temper of mind in us, and to our not being of such a temper as we ought to be. For I appeal to the experience of all mankind, whether those persons and things which suit the temper of their hearts, do not naturally appear amiable in their eyes: And certainly, if God does not suit the temper of our hearts, it is not owing to any fault in him, but the fault must be wholly in ourselves. If the temper and disposition of God (i. e, his mor-

al perfections,) be not agreeable to our temper and disposition, most certainly our temper and disposition are very wrong. *If God were your father, ye would love me;* but *ye are of your father the devil*, therefore ye hate me....(*John* viii. 42, 44.) i. e. "If you were of a temper like God, ye would love me; but being of a contrary temper, hence you hate me. If you were of a right temper, I should appear amiable unto you; and it is wholly owing to your bad temper, that I appear otherwise. *If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.*" ....(verse 39.)

OBJ. *But be it so, yet I cannot help being of such a temper as I am of; how, therefore, am I wholly to blame?*

ANS. You have as much power to help being of such a temper, as the *scribes* and *Pharisees* had; but Christ judged them to be wholly to blame, and altogether inexcusable. They *could not* like Christ or his doctrine: *Ye* CANNOT *hear my word*, says Christ, (*verse* 43); but their CANNOT....their *inability*, was no excuse to them in Christ's account, because all their inability, he plainly saw, arose from their bad temper, and their want of a good disposition. And, although they had no more *power* to help being of such a temper than you have, yet he judged them wholly to blame, and altogether inexcusable. (*John* viii. 33—47....*John* xv. 22—25.) And now we know, that *his judgment is according to truth.* But, in order to help you to see into the *reason* of the thing, I desire you seriously and impartially to consider,

1. That *sinners are free and voluntary in their bad temper.* A wicked world have discovered a very strong disposition to hate God, even from the beginning: And the Jewish nation, God's own peculiar people, of whom, if of any, we might hope for better things, were so averse to God and his ways, that they hated and murdered the messengers which he sent to reclaim them, and, at last, even murdered God's own Son. And now, whence was all this? Why, from the exceeding bad and wicked temper of their hearts. *They have hated me without a cause* ....John xv. 25. But did any body *force* them to be of such a

bad temper? Surely no; they were *hearty* in it. Were they of such a bad temper *against their wills?* Surely no; their *wills*....their *hearts* were in it: Yea, they *loved* their bad temper, and *loved* to *gratify* it, and hence were mightily pleased with their false prophets, because they always prophesied in their favor, and *suited* and *gratified* their disposition: and they *hated* whatsoever was *disagreeable* to their bad temper, and tended to *cross* it; and hence were they so enraged at the preaching and the persons of their prophets....of Christ and his apostles; so that they were manifestly *voluntary* and *hearty* in their bad temper. *We have loved strangers, and after them we* WILL *go*....Jer. ii. 25. But *as for the word which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we* WILL NOT *hearken unto thee*....Jer. xliv. 16. *And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets*, &c....II. Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16. And so, all wicked men are as *voluntary* in their bad temper as they were. The temper of the mind is nothing but the *habitual inclination* of the heart: but an *involuntary inclination* of the heart is a contradiction: And the stronger any inclination is, the more full and free the heart and soul is in the thing. Hence the bad *temper*, or the habitual bad inclination of the devil is at the farthest distance from any compulsion—he is most perfectly free and hearty in it: And all sinful creatures being thus *voluntary*, *free*, and *hearty* in the bad temper of their minds; or, in other words, the bad temper of the mind being nothing but the habitual *inclination* of the *heart*, hence all must be to blame in a degree equal to the strength of their bad inclination. In a word, if we were continually *forced* to be of such a bad temper, *entirely against our wills*, then we should not be to blame; for it would not be at all the *temper* of *our hearts:* but so long as our bad temper is nothing else but the habitual *frame*, *disposition*, and *inclination* of our OWN HEARTS, without any manner of compulsion, we are perfectly without excuse,

and that whether we *can help* being of such a temper, or no. For,

2. *If a sinful creature's not being able to help his being of a bad temper, does in the least free him from blame; then the more vile and sinful any creature grows, the less to blame will he be:* because the more vile and sinful any creature grows, the less able is he to help his being of so bad a frame of heart: Thus, if a man feels a bad spirit towards one of his neighbors creeping into his heart, perhaps if he immediately resists it, he may be able easily to overcome and suppress it; but if he gives way to it, and suffers it to take strong hold of his heart....if he cherishes it until it grows up into a settled enmity, and keeps it in his heart for twenty years, seeking all opportunities to gratify it by backbiting, defaming, &c. it will now, perhaps, be clean out of his power to get rid of it, and effectually root it out of his heart: It will, at least, be a very difficult thing. Now, the man is talked to and blamed for backbiting and defaming his neighbor, time after time, and is urged to love his neighbor as himself, but he says *he cannot love him:* But why cannot you? For other men love him. *Why, he appears in my eyes the most odious and hateful man in the world.* Yes, but that is owing to your own bad temper: *Well, but I cannot help my temper, and therefore I am not to blame.* Now, it is plain, in this case, how weak the man's plea is; and even common sense will teach all mankind to judge him the more vile and blame-worthy, by how much the more his grudge is settled and rooted: And yet the more settled and rooted it is, the more *unable* is he to get rid of it. And just so it is here: Suppose a creature loved God with all his heart, but after a while begins to feel his love abate, and an aversion to God secretly creeping into his soul; now, perhaps, he might easily suppress and overcome it: But if he gives way to it, until he loses all sense of God's glory, and settles into a state of enmity against him, it may be quite impossible ever to recover himself: And yet he is not the less, but the more vile, and so the more blame-worthy. If, then, we are so averse to God that we *cannot* love him; and if our bad temper is so

strong, so settled and rooted that we *cannot* get rid of it, this is so far from being matter of excuse for us, that it renders us so much the more vile, guilty, and hell-deserving ; for to suppose that our inability, in this case, extenuates our fault....our inability which increases in proportion to our badness, is to suppose that the worse any sinner grows, the less to blame he is ;—than which, nothing can be more absurd.

OBJ. *But I was brought into this state by Adam's fall.*

ANS. Let it be by Adam's fall, or how it will, yet if you are an enemy to the infinitely glorious God, your Maker, and that voluntarily, you are infinitely to blame, and without excuse ; for nothing can make it right for a creature to be a voluntary enemy to his glorious Creator, or possibly excuse such a crime : It is, in its own nature, infinitely wrong—there is nothing, therefore, to be said—you stand guilty before God : It is in vain to make this or any other pleas, so long as we are what we are, not by compulsion, but voluntarily : And it is in vain to pretend that we are not voluntary in our corruptions, when they are nothing else but the free, spontaneous inclinations of our own hearts. Since this is the case, *every mouth will be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God*, sooner or later.

Thus we see, that, as to a *natural capacity*, all mankind are *capable* of a perfect conformity to God's law, which requires us only to love God with all our hearts : and that all our inability arises merely from the bad temper of our hearts, and our want of a good disposition ; and that, therefore, we are wholly to blame and altogether inexcusable. Our impotency, in one word, is not *natural*, but *moral*, and, therefore, instead of *extenuating*, does *magnify* and *enhance* our fault. The *more unable* to love God we are, the *more are we to blame* : Even as it was with the Jews....the greater contrariety there was in their hearts, to their prophets....to Christ and his apostles, the more vile and blame-worthy were they.* And in this light do the scriptures

* OBJ. But, says a secure sinner, *surely there is no contrariety in my heart to God, I never hated God in my life ; I always loved him.*

ANS. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* verily thought that they loved God, and that, if they had lived in the days of their fathers, they would not have put

constantly view the case. There is not one tittle in the Old Testament or in the New....in the law or in the gospel, that gives the least intimation of any deficiency in our natural faculties.—The law requires no more than ALL our hearts, and never blames us for not having larger natural capacities. The gospel aims to recover us to love God ONLY with ALL our hearts, but makes no provision for our having any new natural capacity ;—as to our natural capacities, all is well: It is in our temper, in the frame and disposition of our hearts, that the *seat* of all our sinfulness lies. Ezek. xii. 2.....*Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not.... they have ears to hear, and hear not, for they are a* REBELLIOUS *house.* This is the *bottom* of the business : We have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and his glory shines all around us, in the heavens and in the earth....in his word and in his ways ; and his name is proclaimed in our ears ; and there is nothing hinders our seeing and hearing, but that we are *rebellious* creatures.—Our contrariety to God makes us blind to the beauty of the divine nature, and deaf to all his commands, counsels, calls, and invitations. We might know God, if we had a heart to know him ; and love God, if we had a heart to love him. It is nothing but our bad temper and being destitute of a right disposition that makes us spiritually blind and spiritually dead. If this heart of *stone* was but away, and a heart of *flesh* was but in us, all

the *Prophets* to death. They were altogether insensible of the perfect contrariety of their hearts to the divine nature. And whence was it ? Why, they had wrong notions of the divine Being, and they loved that false image which they had framed in their own fancies ; and so they had wrong notions of the Prophets which their fathers hated and murdered, and hence imagined that they should have loved them : But they saw a little what a temper and disposition Christ was of, and him they hated with a perfect hatred. So there are multitudes of secure sinners and self-deceived hypocrites, who verily think they love God ; nevertheless, as soon as ever they open their eyes in eternity, and see just what God is, their love will vanish, and their enmity break out and exert itself to perfection. So that the reason sinners see not their contrariety to the divine nature, is their not seeing what God is....It must be so; for a sinful nature and an holy nature are diametrically opposite. So much as there is of a sinful disposition in the heart, so much of contrariety is there to the divine nature. If, therefore, we are not sensible of this contrariety, it can be owing to nothing but our ignorance of God, or not believing him to be what he really is....*Rom.* vii. 8, 9.

would be well: We should be able enough to see, and hear, and understand, and know divine things; and should be ravished with their beauty; and it would be most natural and easy to love God with all our hearts.

And hence, it is most evident that the supreme Governor of the world has not the least ground or reason to abate his law, or to reverse the threatening; nor have a rebellious world the least ground or reason to charge God with cruelty, and say, "It is not *just* that he should *require more than we can do*, and threaten to damn us for not doing;" for, from what has been said, it is manifest that the *law is holy, just, and good*: And that there is nothing in the way of our perfect conformity to it, but our own wickedness, in which we are free, and hearty, and voluntary; and for which, therefore, in strict justice, we deserve eternal damnation. The law is already exactly upon a level with our natural capacities, and it need not, therefore, be brought any lower: And there is no greater punishment threatened than our sin deserves; there is, therefore, no reason the threatening should be reversed;—as to the law, all is well, and there is no need of any alteration: And there is nothing amiss, but in ourselves. It is impudent wickedness, therefore, to fly in the face of God and of his holy law, and charge him with injustice and cruelty; because, forsooth, we hate him so bad that we cannot find it in our hearts to love him; and are so high-hearted and stout that we must not be blamed. No, we are too good to be blamed in the case, and all the blame, therefore, must be cast upon God and his holy law: Yea, we are come to that, in this rebellious world, that if God sends to us the news of pardon and peace through Jesus Christ, and invites us to return unto him and be reconciled, we are come to that, I say, as to take it as an high affront at the hands of the Almighty. "He pretends to "offer us mercy," (say God-hating, God-provoking sinners), "but he only mocks us; for he offers all upon conditions which "we cannot possibly perform." This is as if they should say—"We hate him so much, and are of so high a spirit, that we can-"not find in our hearts to return, and own the law to be just, by

"which we stand condemned, and look to his free mercy, through "Jesus Christ, for pardon and eternal life; and, therefore, if he "will offer pardon and eternal life upon no easier terms, he does "but dissemble with us, and mock and deride us in our misery." And since this is the true state of the case, therefore it is no wonder that even infinite goodness, itself, has fixed upon a day when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: And then shall ungodly sinners be convinced of all their hard speeches which they have ungodlily spoken against the Lord: And then shall the righteousness of all God's ways be made manifest before all the world.

To conclude—God, the great Lord of all, has threatened eternal damnation against all those who do not perfectly keep the law, (*Gal.* iii. 10,) even although they live and die in the midst of the heathen world....*Rom.* i. 18, 19, 20; (of which more afterwards.) And at the day of judgment he will execute the threatening upon all, (those only excepted, that are, by faith, interested in Christ and in the new covenant:) and his so doing will evidently be justifiable in the sight of all worlds, on this ground, viz. That they were not under a *natural necessity* of sinning, but were altogether *voluntary* in their disobedience. Luke xix. 27....*But those mine* ENEMIES *which* WOULD NOT *that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.*

And *this*, by the way, is the very thing which stops the mouth of an awakened, convinced, humbled sinner, and settles him down in it, that he deserves to be damned, notwithstanding all his *doings*, viz. that he is what he is, not by *compulsion*, or through a *natural necessity*, but altogether *voluntarily*. There is nothing more difficult in the whole work preparatory to conversion, than to make the sinner see, and feel, and own, that it is just.... quite just....altogether just and fair for God to damn him. He pleads, *that he is sorry for all his sins, and is willing to forsake them all forever, and is resolved always to do as well as he can.*

He pleads, *that he cannot help his heart's being so bad....that he did not bring himself into that condition, but that he was brought into it by the fall of Adam, which he could not possibly prevent, and which he had no hand in.* But when he comes, in a clear and realizing manner, to see and feel the *whole truth*, viz. that he does not care for God, nor desire to, but is really an enemy to him in his *very heart*, and *voluntarily* so, and that all his fair pretences and promises, prayers and tears, are but mere hypocrisy, arising only from self-love, and guilty fears, and mercenary hopes, now the business is done: For, says he, *It matters not how I came into this condition, nor whether I can help having so bad a heart, since I am* voluntarily *just such a one as I am, and really* love *and* choose *to be what I am.* Rom. vii. 8, 9.... *Sin revived and I died.* He feels himself without excuse, and that his mouth is stopped, and that he must be forced to own the sentence just; for he feels that it is not owing to any *compulsion* or *natural necessity*, but that he is *voluntarily* and *heartily* such a one as he is: And *now*, and not till *now*, does he feel himself to be a sinner, *completely* so; for he, all along before, fancied some goodness to be in him, and thought himself in some measure excusable: and *now*, and not till *now*, is he prepared to attribute his salvation *entirely* to free and sovereign grace. All along before he had something *to say for himself*, like the *Pharisee:* But, with the *publican*, he *now sees* that he lies at *mercy*....Luke xviii. 13. *This* is the very thing that makes all mankind to blame, altogether to blame, for being what they are, namely—that they are *voluntarily* so; *this* is the reason they deserve to be damned for being so, and *this*, when seen and felt by the awakened sinner, effectually stops his mouth.

And *this*, also, is the very thing that makes believers see themselves *wholly to blame* for not being perfectly holy, and lays a foundation for their *mourning* for their *want* of a *perfect* conformity to the law. They feel their defects are not the result of a *natural necessity*, but only of the remains of their old aversion to God, which, so far as they are unsanctified, they are

voluntary in.* And hence they cry out, *I am carnal, sold under sin, O wretched man that I am!*...Rom. vii. 14, 24; and set themselves down for *beasts* and *fools*....Psalm lxxiii. 22.

And finally, this want of a good temper....this voluntary and stubborn aversion to God, and love to themselves, the world and sin, is ALL that renders the immediate influences of the holy spirit so absolutely necessary, or indeed at all needful, to recover and bring them to love God with all their hearts. A bare representation of what God is, were men of a right temper, would ravish their hearts; for his beauty and glory are infinite. It is nothing, therefore, but their badness that makes it needful that there should be *line upon line, and precept upon precept.* It is their aversion to God, that makes any *persuasions* at all needful; for, were they of a right temper, they would love God with all their hearts, *of their own accord.* And surely, were not

* OBJ. "But does not St. *Paul* say, in Rom. vii. 18, *To will is present with* "*me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not?*"

ANS. 'Tis true, he had a strong disposition to be perfectly holy, but his disposition was not perfect. He had a strong disposition to love God supremely, live to him entirely, and delight in him wholly, but his whole heart was not perfectly disposed to do so. There was a spirit of aversion to God, and love to sin, remaining in him. *In me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing*....and this was the ground and cause of all his impotency: So that when he says, *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not*, he means, "To be in a measure disposed to love God su-"premely, live to him entirely, and delight in him wholly, is natural and "easy; but how to get my whole heart into the disposition, I find not—it "is beyond me, through the remains of the flesh, i. e. of my native contra-"riety to God, and love to sin:" Which remaining contrariety to God, and propensity to sin, so far as he was unsanctified, he was *voluntary* in; but so far as he was sanctified, he perfectly hated. *With my mind, I myself serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin*....ver. 25. And *so the spirit lusted against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit;* and these two were *contrary the one to the other*, and hence he *could not do the things that he would*...Gal. v. 17.

OBJ. "But does not St. Paul speak several times, in Rom. vii. as if he "was not *properly to blame* for his remaining corruptions, when he says, *It* "*is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me!*"

ANS. He only means, by that phrase, to let us know that his remaining corruption was not the *governing principle* in him: according to what he had said in *Rom.* vi. 14....*Sin shall not have the dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace:* but does not at all design to insinuate, that he did not see himself to blame, yea wholly to blame, for his remaining corruption....For though he says sometimes, *It is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me*, yet, at other times, *I am carnal, sold under sin*...ver. 14. *O wretched man that I am*....ver. 24—like a broken-hearted penitent. But he could not have mourned for his remaining corruption as being *sinful*, if he had not felt himself to *blame* for it.

men very bad indeed, there would be no occasion for his ambassadors with *such earnestness* to beseech them : *We pray you*, says the apostle, *in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God*....II. Cor. v. 20. But now, that all external means that can *possibly* be used....all arguments, and motives, and entreaties, urged in the *most forceable manner*, should not be able to recover men to God, no not *one*, in *all* the world, without the immediate influences of the holy spirit, can surely be attributed to nothing short of this, that an apostate world are, in very deed, at enmity against God, and their contrariety to him is mightily settled and rooted in their hearts—mightily settled and rooted *indeed*, that *Paul* was nothing, and *Apollos* nothing, and all their most vigorous efforts nothing ; so that without the immediate influences of the holy spirit, not one, by them, although the best preachers, of mere men, that ever lived, could be persuaded to turn to God....I. *Cor.* iii. 7 ; but that the world should, in fact, rise in arms, and put the messengers of heaven to death, seems to argue *enmity* and *malice,* to the highest degree. It is men's *badness* that keeps them from taking in right apprehensions of God, and that makes them blind to the beauty of the divine nature, and that makes them hate God, instead of loving him : but for *this*, they would love God of *their own accord*, without any more ado. *If God were your father*, (says Christ) *ye would love me ; ye are of your father the devil*, therefore ye hate me. Surely, then, all the world are inexcusable, and wholly to blame, for their continuance in sin, and justly deserve eternal damnation at the hands of God, as was before said : Nor is it any excuse to say, "God does not give me sufficient grace to make "me better ;" since I might love God, with all my heart, of my own accord, with all the ease in the world, if I were but of a right temper : Yea, such is his glory and beauty, that I could not but be ravished with it, were I such as I ought to be ; and my needing any special grace to make me love God, argues that I am an enemy to him, a vile, abominable wretch, not fit to live : And to pretend to excuse myself, and say, "I cannot, "and God will not make me," is just as bad as if a rebellious

child should go to his father, and say, " I hate you, and cannot " love you, and God will not, by his almighty power, make me " better, and therefore I am not to blame ;" for the wretch could not but love his good father, were it not that he is so exceedingly vitiated in his temper. If our impotency consisted in and resulted from our want of natural capacities....if it was the business of the holy spirit to give us new natural faculties, then we might plead our inability, and plead God's not giving us sufficient power, in excuse for ourselves : But since all our impotency takes its rise entirely from another quarter, and all our need of the influences of the holy spirit to bring us to love God results from our badness, therefore are we without excuse, although God leaves us entirely to ourselves : And indeed nothing can be more absurd than to suppose the Governor of the world *obliged* to make his creatures love him, *in spite of all their aversion ;* or more wicked than to lay the *blame* of their not loving him, *upon him*, in case he does not.... *Jer.* vii. 8. 9, 10—16.

Obj. *But if it be granted that men's natural powers are adequate with the law of God, and so they, as to their natural capacities, are capable of a perfect conformity to the law ; and if it be granted that the outward advantages, which all have who live under the gospel, are sufficient, were men but of a right temper, to lead them to the true knowledge of God, and so, that all such are without excuse ; yet, if any part of mankind do not enjoy sufficient outward advantages for the true knowledge of God, without which it is impossible they should either love or serve him, how can such justly and fairly be acccounted altogether to blame, and wholly inexcusable ? If the* heathen, *who have no other outward advantages whereby to gain the true knowledge of God, than the works of creation and providence, do but honestly improve what they have, shall not they be accepted, although they fall short of sinless perfection ? Or is it right and fair that they should be damned ?*

Ans. I suppose that those advantages, which all mankind do actually enjoy, would be sufficient to lead them to a true knowledge of God, and so to love and serve him, were they of

a right disposition, and were it not for the prejudices that blind and darken their minds, which arise from their enmity to God, and love to themselves, the world, and sin....*Rom.* i. 20, 28 : And I suppose that God, the wise and holy, just and good Governor of the world, is under no natural obligation to use any supernatural means for the removal of those prejudices ; (*Rom.* ix. 15.) especially considering that men love them, and are obstinate in them, and will not let them be removed if they can help it, as is, in fact, the case....*Rom.* i. 18, 28—*John* iii. 19 : And I suppose that, since the law is holy, just and good, nothing short of sinless perfection *can*, or *ought* to, pass with the supreme Law-giver and Judge of the world, as a condition of acceptance....*Gal.* iii. 10—*Rom.* iii. 20 : And I suppose that God was under no obligations to provide a Savior to bear the curse of the law, and answer its demands for *any*, since *all* are voluntarily at enmity against him and his law....*Rom.* v. 8. Upon the whole, I suppose that all mankind might have been left in their fallen state, without a Savior, or any offers of pardon and peace, or any supernatural advantages whatsoever ; and that yet their natural obligations to love God with all their hearts, would have by no means ceased ; and that it would have been perfectly just and right with God, to have inflicted eternal damnation upon us, for our not doing so....*Rom.* i. 18, and iii. 19. And besides, I suppose that all the nations of the earth might have had the gospel preached to them, and, to this day, enjoyed it, had not the world been in arms against it, and killed the messengers of peace, who were sent to carry the glad tidings of pardon and salvation round the world....*Mat.* xxviii. 19 : And I suppose, that still, in every age of the Christian church, there have been ministers of Christ, who would gladly go to the farthest parts of the earth, to carry the joyful news of a Savior, were men but willing to receive the news, and repent, and convert, and return to God : I know, there are such in this age ; from all which, I suppose that it is right, fair, and just, for God to execute the threatening of his law according to his declared design ...*Rom.* ii. 5, 6. Thus much in general ; but, to be more particular,

1. It is plain that the heathen, as well as the rest of mankind, are under a law that forbids all sin, and requires perfect holiness. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*, let them be *Jews* or *Gentiles*....Rom. i. 18. And since God is what he is, and they his creatures, there is the same general ground and reason that they should love him with all their hearts, as that others should. And it is plain St. Paul looked upon the heathen under obligations *to glorify God as God, and be thankful*....Rom. i. 21; which is the sum of what is required in the first table of the law: And none will pretend that the heathen are not obliged to love their neighbors as themselves, and do as they would be done by; which is the sum of what the second table requires: So that it is a plain case, that they are, by the law of nature, obliged to the same perfect holiness which is required, in God's written word, of the rest of mankind.

2. It is plain, St. Paul looked upon them as enjoying sufficient means of knowledge, and so to be without excuse. *Rom.* i. 18....*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* "Who hold the truth in unrighteousness, i. e. "who, instead of heartily receiving, and loving, and conforming "to the truth, do, from love to their lusts, hate, and wickedly "suppress, all right notions of God....of truth and duty, stifling "their consciences." But how do the Gentiles discover this aversion to the truth, who are under no advantages to know it? "I answer," says the apostle, "their advantages are sufficient; "for (*verse* 19.) *That which may be known of God is manifest* "*in them*; i. e. the perfections of God, which is all that is "knowable of God, are discovered to them;" as he adds, "*For* "*God hath shewed it unto them.*" But were not the perfections of God discovered to them so darkly as not to be sufficiently evident and perceivable? "No," says he; "for (*verse* 20.) "*The invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are* "CLEARLY SEEN, *being understood by the things that are made,* "*even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without*

"*excuse;* i. e. ever since the creation of the world, the per-
"fections of God are clearly to be seen in his works, the things
"which he has made manifesting plainly what a God he is: so
"that those who see not his perfections, and are not sensible of
"his infinite glory, cannot plead their want of sufficient outward
"advantages, in excuse for their ignorance and insensibility; and
"therefore the heathen, who have this advantage, are without
"excuse."* And, still farther to clear up the point, the apos-
tle seems to go on, as it were, to say—"Yea, it is evident that
"the present ignorance of the Gentile nations is affected, and so
"inexcusable, not only from the sufficiency of their present out-
"ward advantages, but also from their *former* misimprovement
"of the advantages which they *heretofore* did enjoy. *Because*
"(ver. 21.) *when they knew God*, i. e. when the heathen nations
"*formerly* had right notions of God instilled into them, being
"instructed in the knowledge of the true God, by Noah and his
"sons, from whom they descended, yet then *they glorified him*
"*not as God, neither were thankful;* their instructions had no
"influence upon them to make them holy: *but* they *became*
"*vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened;*
"i. e. they soon fell off to idolatry, and lost that knowledge of
"the true God, in which they had been instructed and educa-
"ted: *For* (ver. 28) *they did not like to retain God in their*
"*knowledge;* i. e. to remember those instructions which had

* If it should be *objected*, that St. Paul only means that their advantages were so great as to render them inexcusable in their *gross idolatry* and *high-handed wickedness*, because they did, or might have known better than to do so, it may be easily *answered*, from the 18th *verse*, that he means to prove that they were altogether inexcusable, not only in their *gross sins*, but also in *all* their *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness*, i. e. plainly, in *all* their want of a perfect conformity to the moral law, or law of nature; for the least degree of non-conformity, in heart or life, to the first table of the law, is a degree of *ungodliness*, and the very least degree of non-conformity to the second table of the law, is a degree of *unrighteousness*: And St. Paul is express in it that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against ALL *ungodliness*, &c.: And, in *verse* 21, he is full in it that the heathen are wholly inexcusable for *not glorifying God as God*, which is manifestly *all* that the law ever required; so that it is plain he does not design merely to prove that they were inexcusable in their *idolatry*, and the *gross wickedness* of their lives, but also that they were inexcusable in, and wholly to blame for *their not being perfectly holy;* for they did, or might have known, that *God deserved to be loved with all their heart*, and *their neighbor as themselves*.

"been given them concerning the nature and perfections of "God:* But they abandoned themselves to idolatry; (ver. 23, "25.) *For which cause*, (ver. 24, 26)—for which contempt cast "on God, *God gave them up* to all manner of wickedness; so "that the present extreme ignorance, blindness, and wicked- "ness of the Gentile nations, they have, through their aversion "to God and love to sin, brought themselves into: so that it is "manifest they do not desire the knowledge of God, but evi- "dently hate all right notions of him, and so are, beyond dis- "pute, *without excuse;* which was the point to be proved."—Thus he proves that they are without excuse, because their present advantages for the knowledge of God are sufficient—which advantages, ever since the creation of the world, have been common to all; and because they had once superadded advantages from parental instructions, which, instead of well improving, and of carefully handing down from generation to generation, they hated to remember, and, so, soon forgot.

And these *passages* ought to be of more weight to decide the case, because they are not merely occasional strokes, but the apostle is evidently upon the very same point that I am: For, from the 18th *verse* of this *first chapter*, to the 19th *verse* of the *third*, he is industriously laboring to prove, *that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin*, and so *the whole world guilty before God:* And his arguments are not fetched from *Adam's first sin*, but from comparing them with the law of God, whereby he discovers their weaknesses; all the blame whereof, he entirely lays upon them: and because it might have been *objected*, *that*

* And I may add—*Concerning the seed of the woman....the promised Messiah, and the way of salvation through him;* for, no doubt, Noah and his sons had heard of this promise, and told it to their posterity; and if they had handed it down safe, from age to age, the heathen world might, throughout all generations, have been in a salvable state; for this promise contained the sum and substance of the gospel. Methuselah lived *two hundred and forty* years in the days of Adam. Noah lived *six hundred*, and his sons about a *hundred* years in the days of Methuselah: And Isaac was *fifty* years old before all Noah's sons were dead: so that this promise might easily have been handed along down by tradition, and doubtless would have been so, had it been precious in the eyes of the children of men: And afterwards, farther light might have been obtained from Israel, God's peculiar people, by the Gentile nations, had they really been desirous of it.

the heathen world had not sufficient means of knowledge, and so were not wholly to blame and inexcusable in their non-conformity to the law, he does here designedly obviate the *objection*, and prove and declare them to be *without any objection from that quarter*. The apostle evidently takes it for granted, that they had sufficient natural powers to capacitate them for the knowledge of God, and he proves that their outward advantages were sufficient; and so he lays the whole blame of their ignorance, blindness, and wickedness upon themselves; and finally sums them up, with the rest of mankind, as having their *mouths stopped*, and *standing guilty before God....Chapter* iii. 19.

The truth of the case seems, in a few words, to lie here;—that if Adam had never fell, the works of creation and providence had been the glass in which he himself, and all his posterity, would have beheld the glory of the Lord, from age to age; whereby, *being naturally of a right temper*, they would have been effectually influenced to love him, live to him, delight in him, and praise him forever; or, in St. Paul's words, *To glorify God as God, and be thankful.* And I suppose that all mankind, still having the same natural powers, and the same outward advantages, are therefore entirely to blame for, and wholly inexcusable in, all their ignorance, blindness, and wickedness; especially considering they perfectly love to be what they are, and hate to be reclaimed, and stand ready to resist the light when offered, and shut their eyes against the truth, from whatever quarter it comes. *The heavens*, still as clearly as ever, do *declare the glory of the Lord, and the firmament sheweth his handy work; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge*...Psalm xix. 1. The *natural perfections* of God are clearly to be seen in all his works at the first glance, and his *moral perfections* would be equally evident to an intelligent creature of a right temper at the second thought: And then his glory would immediately shine brighter than the sun, and every heart be ravished with his infinite beauty: But such is our alienation from the Deity in this apostate world, and such the vitiated temper of our minds, that while angels see the divine glory in all his works, (*Rev.*

iv. 11.) men, sottish, brutish men, though they have eyes to see, see not; but are blind to the manifestations which God makes of himself, *because they do not like to have God in their knowledge.* And now,

3. *As to the heathens being accepted for honestly improving their powers and advantages*, it is, *in the first place*, most certain, from St. Paul's account, that they were at the very greatest distance from doing so. But, *secondly*, if they had done so, yea, if they had discovered so good a temper of mind as perfectly to have conformed to the divine law, yet it is the very scope of all the apostle's reasoning, in the three first chapters of his epistle to the *Romans*, to prove that *by the deeds of the law no flesh*, neither *Jew* nor *Gentile*, *can be justified:* And since the law is holy, just, and good, it is not, indeed, *reasonable* that any thing short of sinless perfection, *from first to last*, should pass with the righteous Governor of the world as a condition of acceptance. Future obedience, let it be ever so perfect, can do nothing to make amends for former neglects—as has been already proved in another place: But that which, of itself alone, is entirely sufficient to say in this matter, is, that it is expressly declared in *Rom.* i. 18....*The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness* (or every breach of the first table), *and unrighteousness* (or every breach of the second table of the law), *of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness*: which words are evidently designed, by the apostle, to represent the *character* and *state* of the heathen world; for he spends the rest of the *chapter* in enlarging upon this head, shewing how the heathen held the truth in unrighteousness, and were exposed to the wrath of God for their *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness;* and he concludes them all *under sin*, and *guilty*, and lost forever, unless they obtain justification *by faith in Christ*....(See *Chapter* iii. 9, 19, 20, 30 *verses.*) And thus we see how all mankind have not only sufficient natural powers, but also sufficient outward advantages to know God and perfectly conform to his law, even the heathen themselves; and that the very reason they do not, is their want of such a temper as they ought to have, and their voluntary, root-

ed enmity to God, and love to sin.* And now that they are wholly to blame and entirely inexcusable, appears still in a clearer light.

But before I leave this point, I must make this remark, viz. That if God looks upon the advantages of the heathen sufficient, no wonder that he so often speaks of the advantages of his own professing people as being much more than barely sufficient, even although they enjoy only the outward means of grace, without the inward influences of the holy spirit: for, if the *natural* advantages of the heathen are sufficient, surely the *supernatural* advantages of those who enjoy a *divine revelation*, are much more than sufficient: And if the advantages of those who enjoy *only* a divine revelation are much more than sufficient, no wonder then that those who lived in the days of Moses, Isaiah, and Christ, are represented as very monsters of wickedness, for

* OBJ. *But it is impossible they should love God with all their hearts, if they have no hopes of finding favor in his sight;* for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a REWARDER of them that diligently seek him....*Hebrews* xi. 6.

ANS. *Coming to God,* in *Heb.* xi. 6, evidently implies not only a conformity to the law, but also a compliance with the gospel; i. e. it implies not only a disposition to love God with all our hearts, but also a trusting in him for the divine favor and eternal life upon gospel-encouragements; which gospel-encouragements must, therefore, be understood and believed, or it will, indeed, be impossible so to trust in him. But I did not say that the *heathen* were under sufficient outward advantages for an evangelical returning to God, which is what is intended in *Heb.* xi. 6. but only for a compliance with the law of nature, which is what is intended in *Rom.* i. 20, 21.

OBJ. *But still is it not, in the nature of things, impossible they should love God, if they have no hopes of finding favor in his sight?*

ANS. Let common sense decide the case:—A servant hates his master (a very good man) without cause, murders his only son, steals a thousand pounds of his money, runs away into a far country, spends several years in riotous living; at length he is caught, brought home to his master, who is a man in authority; before him he has his trial, is condemned, and has no hope of favor. But how does this render it impossible, *in the nature of things,* that he should love his master? Why cannot he love his master now, as well as ever he could? He has the same original grounds of love he used to have: He used to love his master—his master is as worthy of his esteem as ever: He has no cause to esteem his master any the less, because he himself has been such a villain, or because he is doomed to die for his crimes;—a punishment justly due. To dislike his master for these things would be perfectly unreasonable: Surely, were he but of a right temper, he could not but take all the blame to himself, and justify his master, and esteem and love him, and be heartily sorry for all his villanies: He can be under no inability, but what must arise from a bad heart.—The application is easy.

remaining blind, senseless, impenitent, and unholy, since they enjoyed such *great*, and so *many superadded* advantages: No wonder, therefore, that Moses every where represents the children of Israel as such a stubborn, perverse, stiff-necked, rebellious people, (particularly see *Deut.* ix.) and makes as if their blindness, senselessness, and impenitency were most unaccountable and inexcusable, since their eyes had seen, and their ears had heard such things, and their advantages had been so great. Deut. xxix. 2, 3, 4....*And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;* (and that he might set forth the greatness of the things which they had seen, he adds), *The great temptations which thine eyes have seen...the signs, and those great miracles,* (all which have been enough to melt the heart of a stone, and) *yet* (as he goes on to say), *the Lord* (by all these things which have been so much more than enough), *hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day:* All these means have not to this day attained the end, and made you see, and feel, and know what a God the Lord is, and bring you to love him, and fear him, and walk in all his ways. Moses evidently speaks of it as a very *strange* thing that they should be blind, senseless, impenitent, and unholy, after such means and advantages—as if they were most inexcusable, yea, under a very aggravated guilt; whereby he plainly takes it for granted, that their advantages had been *much more* than sufficient, had it not been for their want of a right temper, and their wicked obstinacy and perverseness: And yet he mentions none but *outward* means and *outward* advantages, and does not give the least intimation that they had had any *inward* assistance from the holy spirit: he does not bring any such thing into the account, but wholly aggravates their sin and their great inexcusableness, from the consideration of their *outward* helps:—*Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt*, &c. And no wonder he thought them so very inexcusable, since God looks upon the heathen world without excuse, in that while *the*

heavens declare the glory of the Lord, &c. they do not see with their eyes, and perceive with their hearts, and, from a sense of his glory, only thus discovered, love him, and live to him ; for, if their advantages are enough, surely the advantages of the Israelites were much, *very much*, more than enough.

And, upon the same hypothesis, it is no wonder that God looked upon the case of the children of Israel as he did, in the time of Isaiah ; who, from the days of Moses even to that day, had, from age to age, enjoyed such outward advantages as they had, and had had such outward means used with them ; and, in that age, enjoyed so great an outward privilege as the daily prophesying and preaching of Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, and Micah ; who, some, if not all, of them prophesied, it is very probable, *forty* or *fifty* years together at the same time, as we may learn from the first verse in their several books, which tell us when and how long they prophesied, compared with the account we have of those kings' reigns, in the books of the *Kings*, in whose reigns they prophesied ;—no wonder, I say, God speaks as he does in Isaiah v. 1—7.....*My beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill : And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein :* Here is represented the natural powers, and outward advantages of God's people.—*And he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes : And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it ? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes ?* Here all the blame is entirely laid on themselves, and their conduct is considered as being inexcusably, yea, unaccountably bad.—*And now go to ; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard—I will take away the hedge thereof*, &c. Where nothing can be plainer than that the children of Israel are represented as enjoying sufficient advantages for fruitfulness—yea, advantages much more than barely sufficient ; and that their proving as they did, was

unspeakably vile and God-provoking, and for which they deserved utter ruin; and for which, indeed, God did afterwards, according to his declared design, bring utter ruin upon them: But all those advantages were *outward;* nor is the *inward assistance of the holy spirit* any where brought into the account, whenever the greatness of their advantages is set forth, on purpose to show how aggravated their wickedness was: but this is constantly the charge, as in II. Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16, 17....*And the Lord God of their fathers sent unto them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of God arose against his people, till there was no remedy: Therefore, he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees;* not because they did not improve the inward assistances of the holy spirit, but because they did not improve their outward advantages....*did not hearken to God's messengers*: And in this strain their confessions ran, when God, by his grace, had brought them to see what they had done;—as in Dan. ix. 5, 6, &c....*We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts, and from thy judgments: Neither have we* HEARKENED UNTO THY SERVANTS, THE PROPHETS, *which spake in thy name.* The not *hearkening to them* is mentioned as the great aggravation; but their not improving the inward assistance of the spirit is not brought into the account....See *Neh.* ix. 30.

It is evident that the children of Israel, considered as a nation, had not special grace, or the renewing, sanctifying influences of the holy spirit, as one of their advantages, from Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33....*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, in the day I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my* [national] *covenant they brake, although I was as an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward*

parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people ;—where the renewing, sanctifying influences of the holy spirit are mentioned as a peculiar privilege the *Jewish* people were not entitled unto *as a nation*, by that *national covenant* which God entered into with them, as such, at Mount Sinai, (*Exod.* xix.—*Deut.* v.) and which afterwards, at the end of forty years, was renewed at the borders of Canaan ....*Deut.* xxix : Nor indeed were there any inward influences of the holy spirit, at all, promised in that national covenant, as a common privilege, to be by them in common enjoyed : And if they were not entitled to this privilege, as a nation, by their national covenant, then there is no evidence that they, as a nation, did enjoy it ; and, therefore, when God speaks as if he had done all for that nation that could be done, he plainly has respect only to *outward means*, which were all that they, as a nation, enjoyed : And, as to them, he evidently had good ground so to say ; since he had done such great things for them, and sent such prophets among them, and been continually taking all pains, from age to age, to make them a holy people : even as we are ready to say concerning the people of a particular parish, where there is a learned, godly, plain, searching, powerful, enlightening, faithful minister, such as Mr. SHEPARD was in his day, *What more could be done for such a people, that is not done ?* And, therefore, when Stephen charged the Jews, *that they always resisted the Holy Ghost, as their fathers had done*, (in Acts vii. 51,) he means, that they had always resisted the Holy Ghost, as speaking in and by their prophets, as now they did the same spirit that spake in and by him—as is plain from verse 52, and as is also evident from *Neh.* ix. 30. And besides, there is not the least intimation, that those Jews, to whom Stephen spoke, were under any of the inward influences of the holy spirit, but they seem rather to act like creatures wholly left of God. And this hint may help us to understand that phrase in *Neh.* ix. 20. compared with *Num.* xi. 17 : So that, from the whole, it is evident, that the children of Israel, as a nation, were, in Isaiah's time, looked upon as enjoying *advan-*

tages much more than sufficient for their being a holy and fruitful people, had they been of a right temper and not so wickedly obstinate and perverse in their bad disposition; and yet their *advantages* were only *outward*, and the *inward influences of the holy spirit* are not taken into the account.

And well might their advantages be thus esteemed, upon the forementioned hypothesis: Yea, if all mankind are able, in respect to their natural capacities, to yield perfect obedience, and if the advantages of the very heathen were sufficient, had it not been for the want of a right temper in them, and for their very bad disposition, it is no wonder that God speaks here concerning his peculiar people, whose outward advantages were exceedingly great, as if he had had very raised expectations of their being a holy people:—*Wherefore, when I looked it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?* Q. D. "I have done "all, as to outward means, that could be done, to make you a "holy people—enough, and more than enough; and I looked "and expected that you should have been so: and whence is it "that you are not? How unaccountable is it? And how great "is your wickedness! And how great your guilt!" For it is God's way, in the holy scriptures, to speak to men after the manner of men, who are wont to have their expectations of fruitfulness raised, when they sow or plant in a fertile soil, well manured and cultivated....(See *Mat.* xxi. 33—41.) Just so a master is wont to speak to his servant, who is strong, and able for business—"I looked that you should have done such a piece of "work, wherefore is it not done? You had time enough, and "strength enough;" and that although he knew, in all reason, beforehand, that his servant would not do it, because of his lazy, unfaithful temper—the design of such speeches being to represent the great unreasonableness and inexcusableness of such a conduct.

And finally, upon the same hypothesis, it is no wonder that Jesus Christ represents the people of Chorazin, and Bethsaida, and Capernaum, as enjoying advantages sufficient to have brought even Tyre, and Sidon, and Sodom to repentance, which,

in scripture account, are some of the most wicked cities in the world; and so, consequently, more than barely sufficient to have brought them to repentance, who were, by profession, the people of God; for they had enjoyed the ministry of Christ himself, and seen very many of his mighty works....*Mat.* xi. 20—24. If the advantages of the heathen world are sufficient, well might Christ, speaking after the manner of men, seem to be so confident that Tyre, and Sidon, and Sodom would have repented, if they had seen his mighty works; and well might he speak as if the people of Chorazin, &c. had enjoyed advantages more than barely sufficient, and lay all the blame of their impenitency upon them—yea, and look upon them as under an aggravated guilt, and give them so heavy a doom: And yet nothing can be plainer than that the advantages which they enjoyed were only *outward*, for no other are brought into the account, as aggravations of their guilt:—*Woe unto thee, for if the mighty works which were done in you*, &c. He does not, in the least, intimate as if they had any inward help from the holy spirit, but only says he has done *mighty works* among them; yea, in the 25th verse, he plainly declares that they were left destitute of *special grace*.

And thus, while, with St. Paul, we look upon the advantages even of the heathen world as sufficient to lead them to the true knowledge of God, and a perfect conformity to his law, but for their want of a good temper, and their voluntary aversion to God and love to sin, we easily see whence it is that the external advantages of those who enjoy the benefit of a divine revelation, together with other outward means of grace, are represented as being much more than barely sufficient—and consequently their guilt, in remaining impenitent and unholy, as being doubly aggravated.

And before I leave this point, I must make one *remark* more, namely, that if the advantages of the heathen world were sufficient, but for their want of a good temper, their voluntary aversion to God and love to sin, to lead them to the true knowledge of God, and a perfect conformity to his law, as has been proved, then God was not under any *natural obligations* to grant to any

of mankind any *supernatural advantages*, but still might justly have required sinless perfection of all, and threatened eternal damnation for the least defect;—I say, God was under no *natural obligations*, i. e. any obligations arising from his nature and perfections: for he might, consistent with his holiness, justice, and goodness, have left all mankind to themselves, without any supernatural advantages, since their natural advantages were sufficient, and they were obstinate in their ignorance, blindness, and wickedness. Most certainly God was not bound to have sent his Son....his spirit....his word....his messengers, and entreat and beseech those who perfectly hated him, and hated to hear from him, and were disposed to crucify his Son—resist his spirit—pervert his word, and kill his messengers, to turn and love him, and serve him; but might, even consistent with infinite goodness itself, have let them take their course, and go on in the way they were set in, and have damned them all at last.

All that the great and glorious Governor of the world requires of mankind, in the law of nature, is, that they love him with all their hearts and souls, and live as brethren together in his world; which is infinitely reasonable in itself, and which they have sufficient natural powers to do. And he has stretched abroad the heavens as a curtain over their heads, which declare the glory of the Lord; and in the earth, and in all his works, his perfections are clearly to be seen—so that all are under sufficient advantages for the knowledge of him; but mankind hate God, and say unto the Almighty, *Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of thy ways:* and hence they still remain ignorant of God, averse to him, and in love with sin: And now, I say, it is as evident as the sun at noon day, that God might fairly have damned such creatures, without using any more means with them. His law being thus upon a perfect level with their natural powers and natural advantages, he was not obliged, as he was the righteous and good Governor of the world, to grant them any supernatural assistance, either outward, by an external revelation, or inward, by the internal influences of his holy spirit: and therefore it is, that the great Ruler of the world has always

acted sovereignly and arbitrarily in these matters, bestowing these supernatural favors upon whom he pleases, as being obliged to none. Thus he has done as to the external revelation: Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20.....*He sheweth his word unto Jacob....his statutes and his judgments unto Israel: He hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for his judgments, they have not known them.* And thus he has done as to the internal influences of his spirit: Mat. xi. 25, 26....*I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight:* And thus God, even to this day, as to both outward and inward helps, *hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion:* He *effectually* sends the gospel to one nation, and not to another; and where the gospel is preached, he, by his spirit, awakens, convinces, humbles, converts whom he pleases, and leaves the rest.

And thus the objection, from the heathen's not having sufficient outward advantages, has been answered; and, from the answer, I have taken occasion to make these (I hope) not unprofitable remarks; and may now return and repeat my former assertion, with still higher degrees of assurance, *viz.* that mankind are altogether to blame for, and entirely inexcusable in, their non-conformity to the holy law of God, and therefore justly deserve damnation—and that even the heathen, as well as others.

Thus have I endeavored to shew what is the exact measure of love and obedience that God requires of the children of men, and that all mankind have sufficient natural powers and outward advantages, and that all their blindness, ignorance, and wickedness, are voluntary, chosen, and loved: And I have been the larger upon these things, in order to clear up the *justice* of God and his law, and the *grace* of God in his gospel—both which have been sadly misrepresented by those who have not aright understood or well attended to these things. They have said that it is not just in God to require sinless perfection of mankind, or damn any for the want of it: They have said that the

law is abated and brought down to a level with (I hardly know what, unless I call it) the vitiated, depraved temper of an apostate world, who both hate God and his holy law, and want an act of toleration and indulgence to be passed in favor of their corruptions, that, at heart, they may remain dead in sin, and yet, by a round of external duties, be secured from damnation at last: And so they have, like the Pharisees of old, (*Mat.* v.) destroyed the law by their abatements; and now the law, only by which is the knowledge of sin, being thus laid aside, they are ignorant of their sinful, guilty, helpless, undone state, and so are insensible of their need of the sovereign grace of God, through Jesus Christ, to save them—and fancy they are well disposed enough to turn to God of their own accord: And having imbibed such notions of religion, they easily see that the better sort of heathen have, for substance, the same religion with themselves, and therefore have equal charity for them;—not being really sensible of their need of gospel-grace for themselves, they have full charity for the heathen, who never so much as heard of it: But what I have said is sufficient, I think, to clear the *justice* of God in his law, and the *grace* of God in the gospel, and sweep away this refuge of lies, by which so many gladly quiet their consciences, and wofully deceive their own souls. However, of these things we shall still have something more afterwards.

Thus, we have gone through what was proposed....have considered what was implied in love to God, and from what motives we are to love him, and what measure of love is required: and all that has been said cannot possibly be summed up in fewer or plainer words than these, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul....with all thy mind, and with all thy strength:* This is the *first and great commandment;* in conformity whereunto the first and great part of religion does consist: And the *second*, which is *like* unto it, being the foundation of the other half of (this part of) religion, (now under consideration), is, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;* which is what we are, in the next place, to proceed to a consideration of.

SECTION IV.

OF LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBOR.

II. *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself:* In which words we have (1.) the duty required—*Thou shalt love.* (2.) The original, natural ground and reason of it intimated—*Thy neighbor;* which *name*, given to our fellow-men, may lead us to consider them *as being what they are* in themselves, and as sustaining some kind of *character* and *relation* with regard to us.—(3.) The rule and standard by which our love to our neighbor is to be regulated—*As thyself.* Here, therefore, we may consider what is implied in love to our neighor....from what motives we are to love him, and by what standard our love is to be regulated, as to its nature and measure.

First, Let us consider *what is implied* in that *love to our neighbor*, which, by the law of God, is required of us: And, in *general,* it is pre-supposed, or implied, that we have a right temper of mind....an upright, impartial, candid, benevolent temper, even to perfection, without the least tincture of any thing to the contrary; for, without this, we shall not—we cannot view our neighbors in a true light, nor think of them....nor judge of them ....nor feel towards them, exactly as we ought. A wrong temper....a selfish, partial, uncandid, censorious, carping, bitter, stingy, proud temper, will unavoidably give a wrong turn to all our thoughts of, and feeling towards, our neighbors;—as is manifest from the nature of the thing, and from universal experience. Solomon observes, that *as a man thinketh, so is he;* and it is as true, that *as a man is, so he thinketh;* for out of the heart—the temper and disposition of the man, proceed his thoughts of, and feelings towards, both persons and things, according to our Savior....*Mat.* xii. 33, 34, 35. An upright, therefore impartial, candid, benevolent temper, to perfection, without the least tincture of any thing to the contrary, is pre-supposed and implied, in the love required, as being, in the nature of things, absolutely necessary thereto. We must have a right temper, and, under the influence thereof, be perfectly in a disposition to view our

neighbors in a right light, and think and judge of them, and be affected towards them as we ought; i. e. *To love them as ourselves*. Particularly,

1. There is a certain *esteem* and *value* for our fellow-men, which, upon sundry accounts, is their due, that is implied in this love. There are valuable things in mankind: some have one thing, and some another—some have gifts, and some have grace—some have five talents, and some two, and some one—some are worthy of a greater esteem, and some less, considered merely as they are in themselves: and then some are, by God, set in a higher station, and some in a lower, sustaining various characters, and standing in various relations; as magistrates and subjects, ministers and people, parents and children, masters and servants, &c. And there is a certain esteem and respect due to every one in his station. Now, with a disinterested impartiality, and with a perfect candor, and a hearty good-will, ought we to view the various excellencies of our neighbors, and consider their various stations, characters, and relations; and, in our hearts, we ought to give every one his due honor, and his proper place, being perfectly content, for our parts, to be and to act in our own sphere, where God has placed us; and, by our fellow-mortals, to be considered as being just what we are: and indeed, this, for substance, is the duty of every one in the whole system of intelligent creatures. As for God most high, the throne is his proper place, and all his intelligent creatures have their proper places, both with respect to God, and with respect to one another—which places they are bound to take, and to acquiesce in with all their hearts. We have an instance of this temper, to a good degree, in David: He was sensible that Saul was the *Lord's anointed*, and that it became him to render honor to whom honor is due, and fear to whom fear, and his heart was tender: hence *David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt*....I. Sam. xxiv. 5. This temper will naturally dispose us to feel and conduct *right* towards our superiors, inferiors, and equals; and so lay a solid foundation for the performance of all relative duties. The contrary to all this

is a proud and conceited temper, attended with a disposition to despise superiors, scorn equals, and trample upon inferiors; a temper in which men over-value themselves, their friends and party, and under-value and despise all others. Such do not consider persons and things as being what they are, and think, and judge, and be affected, and act accordingly: Nor do they consider, or regard the different stations in which men are set by God, or the characters they sustain by divine appointment. They are not governed by the reason of things, and the sense of what is right and fit; but by their own corruptions. This was the case with Korah and his company, when they rose up against Moses and Aaron, and said, *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them*....Num. xvi. 3. Pride makes superiors scornful in their temper, and tyrannical in their government; and pride makes inferiors envious in their temper, and ungovernable in their lives; and it makes equals jealous, unfriendly, contentious: In a word, it lays a foundation for the neglect of all relative duties, and for a general discord and confusion among mankind.

2. We ought not only to consider, esteem, and respect our fellow-men, as being what they are, and, with a perfect impartiality, give them their due, in our very hearts, according to what they are, and to the stations they stand in, being perfectly content, for our own parts, with the place which God has allotted to us in the system, and to be and act in our own proper sphere, and willing to be considered by others as being just what we are; but it is farther implied in the love required, that we be *perfectly benevolent* towards them; i. e. that we consider their *happiness*, as to body and soul—as to time and eternity, as being what it really is, and are (according to the measure of our natural capacities) thoroughly sensible of its value and worth, and are disposed to be affected, and act accordingly, i. e. to be tender of it....value and promote it, as being what it is—to long, and labor, and pray for it—and to rejoice in their prosperity, and be grieved for their adversity; and all

from a cordial love, and genuine good-will ;—the contrary to which is a *selfish spirit*, whereby we are inclined only to value, and seek, and rejoice in our own welfare, and not care for our neighbor's, any further than we are influenced by self-love and self-interest—which selfish spirit also lays a foundation for *envy* at our neighbor's prosperity, and *hard-heartedness* in the time of his adversity, and inclines us to hurt his interest, to promote our own. To love our neighbor as ourselves, makes it *natural* to do as we would be done by ; but a selfish spirit makes it *unnatural*. *Malevolence*, *malice*, and *spite*, make it even *natural* to delight in our neighbor's *misery :* And hence it is, that *revenge* is so sweet, and *backbiting* and *detraction* so agreeable in this fallen, sinful world.

3. I may add, that, so far as our fellow-men are proper objects of *delight* and *complacency*, so far ought we to take *delight* and *complacency* in them : And hence it is that the godly man feels such a peculiar love to the children of God, for that image of God which he sees in them. The saints are, in his account, *the excellent of the earth, in whom is all his delight*....Psal. xvi. 3. The godly man is of Christ's temper, who said, *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*....Mat. xii. 50. But wicked men are of another *taste ;* and the things....the tempers and dispositions in their neighbors, which to them appear excellent, and upon the account of which they delight in them, are odious in God's sight. *Luke* xvi. 15....*For that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God ;* for it is the temper of wicked men not only to do wickedly themselves, but also to have pleasure in others that do so too....*Rom.* i. 32. Those who are vain, or unclean, or intemperate, suit each other, and take delight in one another's company ; while, at the same time, they distaste and disrelish those things among mankind which are truly most worthy of our delight. In a word, we ought so to esteem others as to be heartily disposed to treat them with all that respect which is their due ; and to have such a tender regard for their welfare as to be perfectly disposed, in every instance,

and, in every respect, to do as we would be done by; and to take notice of all their good properties with that entire friendliness and perfect candor, as may dispose us to take all that delight and complacency in them which is fit: In order unto all which, it is requisite that we be perfectly free from any tincture of pride, selfishness, &c. and have our hearts full of humility, benevolence, candor, and goodness. And now,

SECONDLY. *The motives by which we are to be influenced*, thus to love our neighbors as ourselves, are such as these:—1. *It is right and fit in itself:* As the apostle, exhorting children to obey their parents in the Lord, uses this motive, *For this is right*....Eph. vi. 1. The reason of God's requiring of us to love our neighbors as ourselves, is because it is, in its own nature, right that we should; and this ought, therefore, to move and influence us to do so. There is the same *general* reason why I should love my neighbor, as why I should love myself. Lovely things are as worthy of being loved in him as in me; and, therefore, by me, ought, in all reason, to be loved as much. There is the same reason why my neighbor should be esteemed as being what he is, and according to the station he stands in, as that I should. To esteem myself above my neighbor, merely because I am *myself*, without any other reason, is unfit and wrong, at first sight: So to admire my children.... my friends....my party, as if there were none such, merely because they are *mine*, is unreasonable and absurd. My very worst enemy ought, by me, to be considered and esteemed as being what he is, with an impartiality perfectly disinterested, as well as my very best friend. Good properties are not at all the better, merely for belonging to me, or to my friends; or the worse, for belonging to my neighbor, or my enemy: But it is right I should view things as they are, and be affected towards them accordingly; indeed, I ought to be so far from a disposition to esteem myself above others, and to be prejudiced in my own favor, (since I am capable of a much more full and intimate acquaintance with my own sins and follies, than with the sins and follies of others), that I ought rather to be habitually

disposed to prefer others in honor above myself....*Rom.* xii. 10. —*Phil.* ii. 3. And so, as to my neighbor's welfare and happiness, there is the same *general* reason why it should be dear to me, as that my own should: His welfare is worth as much, in itself, as mine; it is as worthy, therefore, to be valued, esteemed, sought after, and rejoiced in, as mine: It is true, my welfare is more immediately put under my care by God Almighty, and so it is fit it should, by me, be more especially taken care of;—not that it is of greater worth for being mine, for it is not; but only because it is more immediately put under my care by God Almighty: The same may be said of the welfare of my family, &c.; but still my neighbor's welfare is, in itself, as precious and dear as mine, and he is my neighbor....he is flesh and blood as well as I, and wants to be happy as well as I, and is my brother by *Adam*; we are all but one great family—the offspring of the same common parents; we should, therefore, all be affected as brethren towards one another....love as brethren, and seek each other's welfare most tenderly and affectionately, as being sensible how dear and precious the welfare of each other is;—this is perfectly right: And so we should bear one another's burthens....mourn with them that mourn, and rejoice with them that rejoice, as being tender-hearted, cordial friends to every body; and this from a real sight and sense that such a temper and conduct is perfectly right and fit, in the nature of things: And whereas there may be several things in my neighbor truly agreeable, it is evidently right I should delight in those good properties according to their real worth;—it is a duty I owe to my neighbor, the possessor, and to God, the giver of those good gifts.

2. But that I should thus love my neighbor as myself, is not only, in its own nature, right, but is also *enjoined upon me by the law and authority of God, the supreme Governor of the world:* So that, from love to God, and from a sense of his right to me, and authority over me, I ought, out of obedience to him, to love my neighbor as myself, and always, and in all respects, to do as I would be done by: and not to do so, is not only to injure

my neighbor, but to rebel against God, my King and Governor—and so becomes an infinite evil: Hence, it is charged upon David, that, by his conduct respecting Uriah, he had *despised the Lord*, and *despised the commandment of the Lord;* and this is mentioned as the *great evil* of his sin....II. *Sam.* xii. 9, 10: For he had not merely murdered one of his fellow-worms, but risen up in rebellion against the most high God; and practically said, "I care not for God, nor his authority....I love my lust, and will gratify it for all him:" And therefore, when David was brought to true repentance, the native language of his soul, to God, was—*Against thee, thee only have I sinned*....Psal. li. 4. It is *rebellion*, therefore....it is *despising* the Lord....it is an *infinite evil*, not to love our neighbors as ourselves.

3. We have not only the authority, but also *the example of God, to influence us to this great duty of love and benevolence.*—God is love: He has an infinite propensity to do good, and that in cases where there is no motive from without to excite him; yea, where there is every thing to the contrary: He loves to make his sun to rise, and his rain to fall, upon the evil and unthankful: He loves to fill the hearts of all with food and gladness, and to strew innumerable blessings round a guilty, God-hating world; yea, out of his great goodness, he has given his only Son to die for sinners, and offers grace and glory, and all good things, through him—being ready to pardon, and receive to favor, any poor, guilty wretch, that will repent, and return to him, through Jesus Christ: And now for us, after all this, not to love our fellow-men—yea, not to love our very worst enemies, is very vile. Since *God has so loved us, we ought* surely *to love one another*....I. John iv. 11: Since he has treated us, his enemies, so kindly, we ought now, as *dear children*, to imitate him, and *love our enemies, and bless them that curse us, and do good to them that hate us, and pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us*....Mat. v. 44, 45. The infinite beauty in the goodness of the divine nature lays us under infinite obligations to imitate it, in the temper of our minds, and in our daily conduct: And it is ingratitude....it is a shame....it is

abominable wickedness, not to love our worst enemies, and forgive the greatest injuries. Since the great Governor of the world has treated us worms and rebels as he has, one would think that, after all this, we should never be able to find a heart to hate or injure any mortal: Surely, we are under very strong obligations to accept that divine exhortation in Eph. iv. 31, 32....*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from among you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you:* And (Chap. 5. verse 1.) *Be ye followers of God as dear children.* Besides, there are many *additional obligations* to love and benevolence, and to peculiar respect and kindness between *husband* and *wife*, *parents* and *children*, *friend* and *friend*, &c. arising from their mutual relations, and dependancies, and from special kindnesses already received or hoped for. And now,

THIRDLY, *As to the standard by which our love is to be regulated, viz.* Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself.* In order rightly to understand it, we must—1. Place ourselves, sensibly, as in the presence of the infinitely great and glorious God, before whom all the nations of the earth are nothing and less than nothing, and vanity, and, in the light of God's greatness and glory, we must take a view of our own littleness and deformity, and so learn how we ought to be affected towards ourselves, compared with God; and as we ought to love ourselves, so ought we to love our neighbor: And now, in *general*, we ought to be disposed towards God, as being what he is, and towards ourselves and neighbors, as being what we and they are. *Particularly*, God's honor in the world ought to appear infinitely more valuable and precious than our own, and therefore our own ought to seem as a thing of no worth, compared with his, and, as such, to be freely parted with when God's honor calls for it; and as free should we be to see the reputation of our dearest friends given up for God's sake. The same may be said of our worldly interest and of all our worldly comforts, when compared with God's interest and the interest of his Son's kingdom

in the world, and of the worldly interests and comforts of our dearest friends: All, both ours and theirs, is comparatively nothing, and ought to appear so to us; yea, our lives and their lives are just the same things—comparatively of no worth, and to be parted with in a moment, without the least reluctance, when God's honor or interest calls therefor. 2. In order to a right understanding of this standard, we must also observe, that our love to ourselves is *habitual*, *unfeigned*, *fervent*, *active*, and *permanent:* so also must be our love to our neighbors. 3. A regular self-love respects *all* our interests, but especially our *spiritual* and *eternal* interest: so ought our love to our neighbors. 4. A regular self-love naturally prompts us to be concerned for our welfare *tenderly*....to seek it *diligently* and *prudently*....to rejoice in it *heartily*, and to be grieved for our calamities *sincerely:* so ought our love to our neighbors to prompt us to feel and conduct with regard to their welfare. 5. Self-love makes us take an *unfeigned pleasure* in promoting our own welfare: We do not think it *hard* to do so much for ourselves;—the *pleasure* we take in promoting our welfare *rewards* our *pains*.....The same genuine kind of love ought we to have to our neighbor; and so to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* 6. We ought never to speak of our neighbor's sins, or weaknesses, or any way expose him to shame and contempt in the world, in any case whatsoever, except such wherein it would be our duty to be willing ourselves to be so exposed by him, were we in his circumstances, and he in ours: And then we are to do it with that sensible tenderness for him that we could reasonably desire from him, towards us, in a like case.

Thus, then, we have briefly considered the second great command of the law, and see what that meaneth—*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* To love God with all our heart, lays a foundation, and prepares the way for us to love our neighbors as ourselves. It removes and takes away those things which are contrary to this love; such as pride, selfishness, worldliness, a narrow, stingy, envious, revengeful temper. True love to

God mortifies and kills these things at the root. And, *secondly*—True love to God assimilates us to the divine nature, and makes us like God in the temper of our minds. But God is love: and the more we are like God, the more are our hearts, therefore, framed to love and benevolence. *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* Love to God sweetens the soul, and enlarges our hearts to love our fellow-men. And *thirdly*—The more we love God, the more sacred is his authority with us, and the more glorious, amiable, and animating does his example appear, and the greater sense have we of our obligations to gratitude to him; all which tend jointly to influence us to all love and goodness towards our neighbors: So that, he that knows God, and loves him, will be full of love to mankind; and, therefore, *he that loveth not, knoweth not God* ....I. John iv. 8. On the other hand, where there is no true love to God, there is no true love to mankind; but the heart is under the government of pride, selfishness, and other corruptions, which are contrary to love: So that a genuine love to mankind is peculiar to the godly....I. *John* iv. 7. 8.

And now, from what has been said, we may evidently see, these following sorts of love to our neighbor, are, neither of them, the love required, however nearly they may sometimes seem to resemble it.

1. What is commonly called *natural compassion*, is not the love here required; for the most wicked, profane man may be of a very compassionate temper: so may the proud, the selfish, the envious, the malicious, and spiteful man—as experience plainly shows. And besides, natural compassion does not take its rise from any sense of the rectitude and fitness of things, or any regard to the divine authority, but merely from the animal constitution: And men seem to be properly passive in it. It is much the same thing in the human, as in the brutal nature: It is, therefore, a different thing from the love here required.

2. The same may be said of what is called *good-nature:* It arises merely from animal constitution, and is not the love here required; for such a man is not influenced in his love by the

reason and nature of things, or the authority of the great Governor of the world, or from a consideration of the infinite goodness of the divine nature, any more than the beasts are, who are some of them much better tempered than others: So that this sort of love has nothing of the nature of religion in it: And it is evident that many wicked and ungodly men have much of this natural good-temper, who yet have no regard to God or duty: Yea, a secret grudge against a neighbor, reigning in the heart, may be, in the *good-natured* man, consistent with his *good-nature*, but it is not consistent with the love here required; and therefore they are evidently *two* things.

3. That love which is commonly called *natural affection*, is not the love here required. It is true *that* man is worse than the beasts who is without natural affection, for they evidently are not; but every man is not a saint, because he has natural affection: And it is true we owe a peculiar love, according to God's law, to our relatives; but natural affection is not this love: for there are many ungodly wretches, who care neither for God nor his law, who have as much natural affection as any in the world; yea, it is a common thing for ungodly parents to make very idols of their children;—for them, they go, and run, and work, and toil, by night and day, to the utter neglect of God and their own souls: and surely this cannot be the very love which God requires: And besides, as natural affection naturally prompts parents to love their children more than God, and be more concerned for their welfare than for his glory, so it is commonly a bar in the way of their loving others as they ought:—They have nothing to give to the poor and needy—to the widow and the fatherless; they must lay up all for their children: yea, many times they rake and scrape, cheat and defraud, and, like mere earth-worms, bury themselves in the world; and all this for the sake of their children: And yet all this love to their children does not prompt them to take care of their souls. They never teach their children to pray, nor instruct them to seek after God: They love their bodies, but care little for their souls: Their love to the one is beyond all bounds, but, to the other,

is little or nothing: It is an irrational fondness, and not the love required. Indeed, if parents loved their children as they ought to do, their *love* would effectually influence them to take care of their souls, and do all their duty to them—which *natural affection* evidently does not; and therefore it is not that love with which God, in his law, requires parents to love their children: Nor, indeed, does there seem to be any more of the nature of true virtue or real religion in the *natural affection* of men, than there is in the natural affection of beasts—both resulting merely from animal nature and a natural self-love, without any regard to the reason and nature of things.

4. Nor is that the love here required, which arises merely from a *party-spirit;* because such a one is of their party, and on their side, and loves those whom they love, and will plead, stand up, and contend for them, and maintain their cause: For such a love is pregnant with hatred and ill-will to every body else; and nothing will humor and gratify it more than to see the opposite party hated, reviled, and blackened: And besides, such a love is nothing but self-love in another shape. *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: But I say unto you, love your enemies.....* Mat. v. 43, 44.

5. Nor is that the love here required, which arises merely from *others' love to me:* As if a rich man is kind and bountiful to poor people all around him, and appears to love and pity them, they, though almost ever so wicked, will feel a sort of love to him: But if this rich man happens to be a civil magistrate, and is called to sit as a judge in their case, and passes judgment against them for their crimes, now their love dies, and enmity, and hatred, and revenge begin to ferment in their hearts. In this case, it is not the *man* they love, but rather his *kindnesses:* And their seeming love, is nothing but a certain operation of self-love. And indeed, however full of love persons may seem to be to their neighbors, if all arises *merely from self-love*, or is for *self-ends*, nothing is genuine: and that whether things worldly, or things religious, occasion their love. A

poor man will love and honor those who are rich, if he hopes to get any thing by it. A rich man may be kind to the poor, with an eye to his credit. An awakened sinner will love an awakening preacher, in hopes he shall be converted by his ministry. A minister may seem to show a world of love to the souls of sinners, and all with an eye to applause. Hypocrites will love a godly minister, so long as he thinks well of them, and happens not to detect their hypocrisy in his public preaching. Even the *Galatians* were very full of love to Paul for a while, so long as they thought he loved them, and had been the instrument of their conversion; yet, afterwards, they lost their love, and turned his enemies, for his telling them the truth—while others, who loved him truly for what he was, were more and more knit unto him for those very doctrines for which the *Galatians* hated him. *If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not the publicans the same?*....Mat. v. 46. There is no virtue nor religion in such a kind of love, and it is evidently *not the thing* required by the divine law. And indeed it is a thing as difficult, and as contrary to corrupt nature, for us genuinely to love our neighbors as ourselves, as it is to love God with all our hearts; and there is as little true love between man and man, as there is between men and God. It is for our interest to love God, and it is for our interest to love our neighbors, and therefore men *make as if* they did so, when, really, there is nothing genuine and true: And, at the day of judgment, when a wicked world comes to God's bar, and their past conduct is all brought to light, nothing will be more manifest than that there never was a spark of true love to God or man in their hearts, but that, from first to last, they were acted and governed either by their animal constitution, or else merely by self-love.

6. I may add, nor is that the love required, when men love others *merely because they are as bad, and so just like themselves:* —Nature and self-love will prompt the worst of men to do so. The vain and profligate love such as are as bad as themselves: And, from the same principle, erroneous persons have a pecu-

liar regard for one another : And the enthusiast and blazing hypocrite may, from the same principle, seem to be full of love to their own sort, though full of malice against all others : And they may think that it is *the image of God* which they love in their brethren, when, indeed, it is only *the image of themselves*. Persons of a *bad taste* may greatly delight in those things in others, which are very odious in the sight of God : But surely this cannot be the love required ; and yet, by this very thing, many a hypocrite thinks himself a true saint.

Thus we see what it is to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves, and see these two distinguished from their counterfeits : And so we have gone through the two great commands of the law, in a conformity to which the very essence of religion does much consist.

And now it is added by our Savior, *Upon these two hang all the law and the prophets.* The law and the prophets, i. e. the inspired writings of the Old Testament consider these two maxims, *that we must love God with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves*, as *first* and *foundation-principles :* and all the various duties which they urge, respecting God and our fellowmen, are but so many *inferences* and *deductions* from them.

God must be loved with all the heart : and therefore we must make him our God and none else, according to the *first command*—worship him according to his appointed institutions, agreeably to the *second command*—with becoming reverence and devotion, according to the *third*—and that in all such set times as he hath appointed in his word, according to the *fourth.*

Our neighbor must be loved as ourselves : and therefore we must render honor to whom honor is due, according to the *fifth command ;* and be tender of our neighbor's life, chastity, estate, and good name, according to the *sixth*, *seventh*, *eighth*, and *ninth commands ;* and rejoice in his welfare and prosperity, according to the *tenth :* and, in all things, treat him as we could reasonably desire him to treat us, according to that golden rule of Jesus Christ, in *Matthew* vii. 12.

And as all the duties we owe to God and man, are thus, in the *theory*, but so many *deductions*, necessarily flowing from these two *maxims*, or *first principles*, so, when the law of God is written in the heart of a sinner by divine grace, and put in his inward parts, there will, from these two principles, naturally flow all duties to God and his neighbor, in his daily practice; i. e. from a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, he will naturally be inclined and enabled sincerely to do all his will—to make him his GOD, according to the first command—to worship him according to his own appointments, with becoming reverence, and at all suitable times, according to the rest. It will be his *nature* to do all this—his meat and his drink, and so his greatest delight. And so, also, from a genuine disposition to love his neighbor as himself, he will be naturally inclined and enabled, in all things, and at all times, sincerely to do as he would be done by. It will be his *nature* to do so—his meat and his drink, and so his greatest delight.... *Heb.* viii. 10—*John* xv. 14—I. *John* ii. 3, 4—*Psalm* xix. 10.

So that, as it is in *theory*, so also it is in *practice*: these two are like the *seed* that virtually contains the whole plant, or like the *root* from which the whole tree grows, with all its branches and fruit. And in proportion as a man loves God and his neighbor with a genuine love, in the same proportion will his inclination and ability, thence arising, be, to do all these duties: and consequently, when his love to God and his neighbor arrives to *perfection*, he will be *perfectly* inclined and enabled to be *perfect* in holiness and righteousness, and will *actually*, in *all* things, *perfectly* conform to both tables of the law. And it is equally evident, that, until a man has a genuine love to God and his neighbor in his heart, he will have neither inclination nor ability (in a moral and spiritual sense) to perform one act of true obedience: for as *all true obedience*, according to the law and prophets, is to flow from these two principles, so, consequently, according to the law and prophets, *that* is *not true obedience*, which *does not*: And, therefore, when all a man's religion is

merely from self-love, and for self-ends, he cannot be said, strictly speaking, to do *any duty* to God or his neighbor, or *obey one command;* for he only *serves himself*, and that from a supreme love to himself, which the law and the prophets do not require, but *strictly forbid*, in that they enjoin the *direct contrary*.

So that now, in a few words, we may here see *wherein true religion does consist*, as it stands distinguished from all the *false* religion in the world. The godly man, from seeing God to be just such a one as he is, and from a real sense of his infinite glory and amiableness in being such, is thereby influenced to love him supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively: from which *inward frame of heart*, he freely runs the way of God's commands, and is in his element when doing God's will. He eats, he drinks, he works, he prays, and does all things, with a single eye to God, who has placed him in this his world, allotted to him his peculiar station, and pointed out before him all the business of life....always looking to him for all things, and always giving thanks unto his name, for all his unspeakable goodness to a wretch so infinitely unworthy. And, with a spirit of disinterested impartiality, and genuine benevolence, he views his fellow-men....gives them their places ....takes his own, and loves them as himself: Their welfare is dear to him; he is grieved at their miseries, and rejoices at their mercies, and delights to do all the good he can, to every one, in the place and station which God has set him in. And he finds that this *new* and *divine temper* is inwrought in his *very nature;* so that, instead of a forced religion, or a religion merely by fits, his *very heart* is *habitually* bent and inclined to such views and apprehensions—to such an inward temper, and to such an outward conduct.

This, this is the religion of the Bible—the religion which the law and the prophets, and which Christ and his apostles too, all join to teach—the religion which Christ came into the world to recover men unto, and to which the spirit of God does actually recover every believer, in a greater or lesser degree. Thus, those *who are dead in sin, are quickened*....Eph. ii. 1—*Have*

the law written in their hearts....Heb. viii. 10—*Are made new creatures, all old things being done away, and all things become new*....II. Cor. v. 17—And are effectually *taught to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*....Tit. ii. 12—*And so serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of their lives*....Luke i. 74, 75.

And *this* is specifically different from every sort of false religion in the world: For all kinds of false religion, however different in other things, yet all agree in this, to result merely from a principle of self-love, whereby fallen men, being ignorant of God, are inclined to love themselves supremely, and do all things for themselves ultimately. All the idolatrous religion of the heathen world, in which some took much pains, had its rise from this principle. They had some notion of a future state—of a heaven and a hell, as well as of temporal rewards and punishments, and so were moved by hope and fear, from a principle of self-love, to do something to pacify the anger of the gods, and recommend themselves to the favor of their deities: And all the superstitions of the seemingly devout papist....his *paternosters*, his *ave-marias*, his *penances* and *pilgrimages*, and endless toils, still arise from the same principle: So does all the religion of formalists, and legal hypocrites, in the reformed nations: It is a slavish fear of hell, and mercenary hope of heaven, which, from a principle of self-love, sets all a going; yea, the evangelical hypocrite, who mightily talks of supernatural, divine light—of the spirit's operations—of conversion, and a new nature, still, after all, has no higher principle in him than self-love. His conscience has been greatly enlightened, and his heart terrified, and his corruptions stunned: and he has, by the delusions of Satan, obtained a strong confidence of the love of God, and pardon of his sins; so that, instead of being influenced chiefly by the fear of hell, as the legal hypocrite is, he is ravished with heaven; but still, all is from self-love, and for self-ends: and, properly and scripturally speaking, he neither knows God, nor cares at all for him. And this is the very case

with every *graceless* man living, of *whatever denomination*; whether a Heathen, or Jew, or Christian—whether Papist, or Protestant—whether Church-man, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, or Separatist—whether a Pelagian, Arminian, Calvinist, Antinomian, Baptist, or Quaker. And this is the case with every *graceless* man living, *whatever his attainments may otherwise be*;—though he hath all knowledge to understand all mysteries, and can speak with the tongues of men and angels, and has faith to remove mountains, and zeal enough to give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burned; yet he has no *charity*—he is perfectly destitute of this genuine love to God and his neighbor, and has no higher principle in his heart, from which all his religion proceeds, but a supreme love to himself. For, ever since our first parents aspired to be as gods, it has been the *nature* of all mankind to love themselves supremely, and to be blind to the infinite beauty of the divine nature; and it remains so to be with all, until renewed by divine grace: So that self-love is the highest principle from which unregenerate men do ever act, or can act.

Here, therefore, we have true religion....a religion specifically different from all other sorts of religion in the world, standing in a clear view: yea, and we may be absolutely certain that this is the very thing which has been described: For this conformity to the moral law is, throughout all the Bible, by Moses and the prophets....by Christ and his apostles, represented to be the very thing in which the essence of religion originally consists. "Blessed be the name of the Lord forever, "who has given us so clear a revelation of his will, and so sure "and certain a guide as his word." Come here, all you poor, exercised, broken-hearted saints, that live in this dark, benighted world, where many run to and fro, and where there are a thousand different opinions, and every one confident that he is right;—come here to the law and to the testimony;—come here to Christ himself, and learn what the truth is, and be settled—be confirmed, and be established forever; and remember, and practise upon those words of Jesus Christ, in John vii. 17

....*If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.* O, read the Bible—live lives of prayer and communion with God; yea, die to yourselves, the world and sin, and return home to God through Jesus Christ—and love him, and live to him, and delight in him more and more—and be more and more disinterested and impartial...sincere and fervent, in your love to your neighbors—do all the good, to every one, that you can; in a word, be the servants of God, and grow up into his image, and your certainty of divine truths will proportionably strengthen and increase: For the more your understandings are free from that darkness and prejudice that sin has introduced, the clearer will you view divine truths, and the greater sense will you have of their inherent divine glory; and so your belief of their divinity will be the more unshaken.

Having thus gone through with what was proposed, *a general improvement* of the whole is all that now remains: And, indeed, much use may be made of these great truths, which have been thus explained and proved, for our *instruction* in some of the most controverted points in religion, and to *clear up* the believer's gracious state, and also to promote *our humiliation*, and *thankfulness*, and *universal obedience*.

SECTION V.

RIGHT APPREHENSIONS OF THE LAW USEFUL TO CLEAR UP SOME OF THE MOST CONTROVERTED POINTS IN RELIGION.

USE I. *Of instruction.* We have seen what the law of God requires, and the infinite obligations we are under perfectly to conform to it....we have seen wherein a genuine conformity to the law consists, and how a genuine conformity to it differs from all counterfeits; and what has been said may help us to understand the following particulars:

1. *Wherein consisted the moral image of God in which* Adam *was created.* That *Adam* was created in the image of God, is expressly affirmed in Gen. i. 27.....*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him:* And from these words we have just the same reason to believe that *Adam* was

created in the *moral*, as that he was in the *natural* image of God; because they tell us in plain terms, without any distinction or exception, (nor is there any that can be gathered from any other text), that he was created in the *image of God;* but the *moral* as well as the *natural* perfections of God are equally contained in *his image:* As to the *political* image of God, *Adam*, strictly speaking, was not created in that; because, as the scriptures inform us, it was *after* his creation that he was made *Lord* of this lower world....*Gen.* i. 28. And it is, I think, with less propriety that *this* is, by *divines*, called the *image* of God—I do not know that it is any where so called in scripture; and God was the same he is now, before he sustained the character of supreme Lord and Governor of the world. His *natural* and *moral* perfections comprised his whole image before the world was created; and in this *his image* was his creature, man, created: not in part of his image, for there is no such intimation in all the Bible; but in *his image*, comprising his *moral*, as well, and as much, as his *natural* perfections.

Now, the *moral image* of God does radically consist in a *temper of mind* or *frame of heart* perfectly answerable to the *moral law*—the *moral law* being, as it were, *a transcript of the moral perfections of God:* So that, from what has been said of the nature of the moral perfections of God, and of the nature of the moral law, we may learn wherein consisted that moral image of God in which *Adam* was created. He had a *perfect moral rectitude* of heart....a perfectly *right temper* of mind, and so was perfectly disposed to love God with all his heart, and his neighbors (if he had had any) as himself—was perfectly disposed to give God his place, and take his own....and consider God as being what he was, and be affected and act accordingly....and to consider his fellow-men (if he had had any) as being what they were, and feel and act accordingly: And in this image of God was he created, as the scriptures teach us; i. e. he was brought into existence with such a temper *connatural* to him.

Now here is a new-made creature in a new world, viewing God, and wondering at his infinite glory, looking all round, as-

tonished at the divine perfections shining forth in all his works: He views the spacious heavens....they declare to him the glory of the Lord: He sees his wisdom and his power...he wonders and adores: He looks round upon all his works....they clearly discover to him the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and godhead; and he stands amazed. God makes him Lord of this lower world, appoints to him his daily employment, and puts him into a state of trial, setting *life* and *death* before him; and he sees the infinite wisdom, holiness, justice and goodness of God in all....he falls down and worships....he exults in God, and, with all his heart, gives up himself to God with sweetest delight;—all is genuine, natural, and free, resulting from the native temper of his heart.

Here he beheld God in his infinite glory, viewed his works, contemplated his perfections, admired and adored him with a sweetness and pleasure of soul most refined! Here he saw God in all the trees, plants, and herbs in the garden, his happy seat, while, out of love to God and duty, he attended his daily business...he ate and drank, and blessed his great benefactor! He saw that it was infinitely reasonable that he should love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, if eternal life had not at all been promised; both because God infinitely deserved it at his hand, and also in doing thereof there was the greatest satisfaction and delight: And he saw that if he, in any thing, should disobey his sovereign Lord and rightful Governor, it would be right, infinitely right, that he should be miserable forever, even if God had never so threatened; because to disobey *such a God* appeared to him an infinite evil. He looked upon the promise of eternal life as a mere free bounty: He looked upon the threatening of death as impartial justice: And while he considered *eternal life* under the notion of a REWARD promised to perfect obedience from God, his Governor, he saw his infinite love to righteousness therein, as well as his infinite bounty: And while he considered *death* under the notion of a PUNISHMENT threatened against sin, he saw God's infinite hatred of iniquity therein, as well as his impartial justice: And when he saw how God

loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and beheld his infinite goodness on the one hand, and impartial justice on the other, he was ravished....Now he saw plainly what God was, and his infinite glory in being such, and loved him with all his heart: It was *natural* to account such a God infinitely amiable, and it was *natural* to love him with all his heart;—all was genuine and free, resulting from the *native temper* of his mind.

These being his views and apprehensions, and this his nature, hence, although he was under a covenant of works, yet the hopes of happiness and the fears of misery were not the *original* and *first spring* of his love to God: it was not originally from self-love, and for self-ends, but from a sense of the beauty of the divine nature; and so it was not forced and hypocritical, but free and genuine: it did not feel like a burden, but it was esteemed a privilege; and, instead of being disposed to think it MUCH to love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, he rather thought it infinitely *right* and *fit*, as being God's *due*, and that he deserved no thanks from God, but rather was under infinite obligations to give thanks to God forever, for such an infinite *privilege:* And thus we see wherein that *moral image* of God consisted in which *Adam* was created.

2. From all which, *it is a plain matter of fact that we are born into the world entirely destitute of the moral image of God:* So certain as that the moral image of God radically consists in such a temper, and makes it natural to have such-like views and dispositions—so certain we are in fact born without it. Look into children, and there is nothing to be seen of these things: And we are all sure that such a temper and such-like views and dispositions are not natural to us; yea, most men are sure there is still no such thing in them, and very many believe there is no such thing in the world. *We are*, in fact, *born like the wild ass's colt*, as senseless of God, and as void and destitute of grace: We have *nature*, but no grace—a *taste* for *natural good*, but no *relish* for *moral beauty*—an *appetite* for *happiness*, but *no appetite* for *holiness*—a heart easily affected and governed by selfish considerations, but blind to the moral rectitude and fitness of

things: And so we have a heart to love ourselves, but no heart to love God; and may be moved to act by selfish views, but cannot be influenced by the infinite moral beauty of the divine nature. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh*....John iii. 6—and will only mind and relish things which suit its nature....*Rom.* viii. 5—but is blind to spiritual things....I *Cor.* ii. 14. True, indeed, in children there are many *natural excellencies*....many things pleasing and agreeable: In a good mood, they appear loving and kind, innocent and harmless, humble and meek—and so does a lamb. There is nothing but *nature* in these appearances: It is owing to their animal constitution, and to their being pleased and humored: It is all from no higher principle than self-love.—Cross them, and they will presently feel and act bad enough: They have, in their temper and most early conduct, no regard to God or duty, or to the reason and nature of things, but are moved and affected merely as things please or displease them, making their happiness their last end: And, indeed, if the image of God, holiness, or grace, or whatever we call it, be really such a thing as has been said, then nothing of such a nature can possibly be more plain and evident than this universally is, that mankind are, in fact, born into the world destitute, entirely destitute thereof....*Job* xi. 12: And hence, we must *be born again*....John iii. 3, 6.

Obj. *But where, then, was the propriety of Christ's saying, in Mat.* xviii. 3....Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kindom of heaven? *Is it not here supposed that little children are patterns of humility and goodness?*

Ans. And where was the propriety of those words in *Isaiah* liii. 7—where the prophet, speaking of Christ's meekness and patience under his sufferings, says, *As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth?* Is it not here supposed that *sheep are patterns of meekness and patience?* The truth is, that these allusions do not prove that either sheep or little children naturally have any real humility or meekness, of a gracious nature, but only an appearance of it: And just of the same na-

ture are those phrases in *Mat.* x. 16....*As wise as serpents....as harmless as doves.* But as these scriptures do not prove that *sheep*, and *serpents*, and *doves* have grace, so neither does that other text prove that *little children* naturally have it.

3. By comparing ourselves with the holy law of God, as it has been already explained, we may also learn that we are born into the world, not only destitute of a conformity to the law, but that we are *natively diametrically opposed to it in the temper of our hearts.* The law requires us *to love God supremely*, but the native bent of our hearts is to *love ourselves supremely:* The law requires us *to live to God ultimately*, but the native bent of our hearts is *to live to ourselves ultimately:* The law requires us *to delight in God superlatively*, but the native bent of our hearts is *to delight in that which is not God, wholly:* And, finally, the law requires us *to love our neighbors as ourselves*, but the native bent of our hearts is *to be inordinately selfish.*

These are the earliest dispositions that are discovered in our nature: And although I do not think that they are concreated by God together with the essence of our souls, yet they seem to be the very first propensities of the new-made soul: So that they are, in a sense, *connatural;* our whole hearts are perfectly and entirely bent this way, from their very first motion. These propensities, perhaps, in some sense, may be said to be *contracted*, in opposition to their being strictly and philosophically *natural*, because they are not created by God with the essence of the soul, but result from its native choice, or rather, more strictly, are themselves its native choice: But most certainly these propensities are not *contracted*, in the sense that many vicious habits are—namely, by long use and custom. In opposition to *such* vicious habits, they may be called *connatural.* Little children do very early bad things, and contract bad dispositions; but these propensities are evidently antecedent to every bad thing infused or instilled by evil examples, or gotten by practice, or occasioned by temptations: And hence, it is become customary to call them *natural*, and to say that it is our *very nature* to be so inclined: And to say that these propensities are

natural, would, to common people, be the most apt way of expressing the thing; but it ought to be remembered that they are not *natural* in the same sense as the *faculties* of our souls are: for they are not the workmanship of God, but are our native choice, and the voluntary, free, spontaneous bent of our hearts: And to keep up this distinction, I frequently choose to use the word *native*, instead of *natural*.

And now, that these dispositions are, as it were, thus born with us, is as evident from experience, as any thing of this kind can be; for these are the earliest dispositions that man's nature discovers, and are evidently discovered before little children are capable of learning them from others: Yea, it is plainly the very native bent of their hearts to love themselves above all.... to make their ease, comfort, and happiness their last end and their all, and to seek for all from the *creature*, or, in other words, *from that which is not God*. This is plain to every one's observation; nor did I ever hear any one, as I remember, venture to deny it.

And as children grow up, and their natural powers enlarge, so these propensities grow up, and strengthen, and become more active, and discover themselves plainer; and from this root, this evil fountain, many bad things soon proceed. Observe children through all the days of childhood, and this nature may be easily seen in them....they discover it in all their conduct in ten thousand instances; and there it does and will remain.—We may break them of many bad tricks which they learn, and bad habits which they contract, but we cannot change this principle of their nature. They are disposed to love themselves supremely, seek their own ends ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly; nor can we turn this bent of their hearts. We can, after a sort, instil good principles into them—learn them to read and pray; and, after a sort, to honor their parents, and love their neighbors: we can make them civil, and sober, and humble, and modest, and religious, in a sort, but still their *old nature* remains in its full power: It is restrained, but not altered at all; yea, and after all, these their native dispositions have

the entire government of them ; their whole hearts are as much bent this way as ever: and these propensities govern them in their inward temper, and in all their conduct. They do all from self-love, and for self-ends, and are seeking happiness, not in God, but in something else. These things are plain to every impartial observer ; nor can they be denied by any. Thus *we are all shapen in iniquity, and in sin are we conceived:* And *we are transgressors from the womb, and go astray as soon as we are born.*

And if we leave children, and look into ourselves, we may easily observe that we are naturally of the same temper—inclined to love ourselves supremely, and do all from self-love, and for self-ends, and seek for happiness, not in God, but in something else. We can remember when and how we contracted many other vicious habits, and feel some inward power to get rid of them ; but these propensities we have always had, and they are natural, and our whole hearts are so in them, that it is not in us so much as sincerely to desire to be otherwise. It is true, we may, in a sort, desire and try to alter this our nature, from considerations of duty, of heaven and hell ; but it is all hypocrisy, for we still act merely from self-love, and for self-ends, as much as ever. We have naturally no disposition to desire to love God, only for self-ends ;—all men are conscious to themselves that this is true.

We are naturally *entirely under the government* of these dispositions, in *all things*, and under *all circumstances* :—IN ALL THINGS—in all our civil and religious concerns. It is merely from self-love, and for self-ends, that natural men follow their worldly business, and endeavor to live peaceably with their neighbors ; and, in these things, they are seeking blessedness : And it is merely from self-love, and for self-ends, they do any thing in religion ;—either they mean to be seen of men, or are moved from a slavish fear of hell and mercenary hope of heaven, or from some other selfish consideration.—And, UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, we are naturally under the government of these dispositions : *In prosperity*....then, from an inclination to love ourselves supremely, seek our own happiness ultimately,

and delight in that which is not God wholly, it is our nature to rejoice and be glad; and, from the same inclination, we are disposed to mourn, and murmur, and be discontented *under adversity*. At the *Red-Sea* it was natural for the Israelites to sing praise—at the *bitter waters* it was as natural to murmur. When we are pleased, then we are glad—when we are crossed, then we are sad; but, naturally, we do not care how it goes with God's interest in the world....what becomes of his great name, or whether his honor sinks or swims: no, there is but here and there a *Moses* that cares any thing about this; but, if they can have their own wills, and secure their own interests, they are content. While the spirit of God lets sinners alone, and they live secure and unconcerned, then, from the aforesaid propensities, they are after the world—one after one thing, and another after another; and, although they may keep up a form of religion, for fashion sake, yet, really, they care nothing about God and things eternal. When they come to be awakened to a concern for their souls, though they reform their lives, and take very different courses from what they used to do, yet still all is from the same principle, and for the same end. They have new lives, but the same nature: They do not really care for God or his glory, any more than they used to do, nor take any content in him; but are only after pardon of sin, and peace of conscience, which, according to their present sensations and apprehensions, they think would make them happy. Sinners do not really seek for blessedness in God himself, but in something they hope to receive from him: And hence, when awakened sinners come to get false comfort—think they are pardoned, and so have peace—or think that Christ loves them, and that they shall go to heaven, and so are filled with joy....as all their joy results from self-love merely, so all they rejoice in is what they think they have received, and what they hope yet to receive; but they do not really care for God himself, (whose glory they never saw), any more than they used to do—nor rejoice in him: and hence (ordinarily) having their consciences quieted, they soon go back to the world again for real comfort and blessed-

ness : Or if, after false comfort, they turn enthusiasts, and get to *blazing*, and wax hotter and hotter, and seem to be full of nothing but love to God, and zeal for his glory, it is visions and dreams, revelations and impulses, a firm persuasion they are the peculiar favorites of heaven, and the applause of their party, which they live upon and take comfort in, and by which they are animated ; and all from self-love, and for self-ends : but, in deed and in truth, they neither know God, nor regard him nor his glory, nor live upon him, nor delight in him, any more than they used to do : and thus, in all things, and under all circumstances, unregenerate men are governed by a disposition to love themselves supremely, live to themselves ultimately, and delight in that *which is not God* wholly : And whosoever is well acquainted with mankind may easily see that this is, in fact, the very case, and will naturally be led to make the same observation with the apostle Paul, in Phil. ii. 21....*All seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's.*

And now this disposition, which is thus evidently natural to all mankind, *is directly contrary to God's holy law....is exceeding sinful, and is the root of all wickedness.* First, it is diametrically opposite to God's holy law : for this requires us to love God supremely, and seek his glory ultimately—in direct contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to love ourselves supremely, and live to ourselves ultimately. Again, the law requires us to delight in God superlatively, and choose and live upon him as the only portion of our souls—in direct contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to place our whole hearts upon other things, and live upon them, and take content in them. Finally, the law requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and do as we would be done by—in direct contrariety whereunto, we are naturally inclined to be inordinately selfish, and so not to do as we would be done by : And thus we are all naturally *gone out of the way*, and, in the temper of our own minds, *become corrupt, filthy, and unprofitable, and there is none righteous ; no, not one*....Psalm xiv.—Rom. iii. 10—19. We have lost the image of God....we have lost a right temper of mind....

we have lost a governing sense of the moral fitness of things.... have no eyes to see moral beauty, or hearts to taste and relish the moral excellency of spiritual and divine things....I *Cor.* ii. 14. Hence, in God we can see no form nor comeliness, nor in him, at all, delight; yea, it is natural for it to seem to us as if there was no God....*Psalm* xiv. 1. And now, as though in very deed there were no God for us to be in subjection unto, we set up for ourselves, to make our own interest our last end, and to seek blessedness, not in God, but in something else; and are naturally inclined, without any regard to God's law, to make our own wills our only rule; and now, having cast off the government of God, and forsaken the fountain of living waters, we go every one his way, one to his farm, another to his merchandize, all *serving divers lusts and pleasures:* So that it might justly be wondered at, how any among mankind should ever have it enter into their hearts, to imagine that we are not fallen creatures, universally depraved, when it is, so evidently, a plain matter of fact. I think it can be owing to nothing but men's ignorance of the law, in its spiritual nature, purity, strictness, and extent, and their not comparing themselves therewith: and indeed St. Paul tells us that this is the case—Rom. vii. 8.... *For without the law sin was dead:* For did men but rightly apprehend that God is such an one as the law speaks him to be, and that he requires us to be what really he does, they could not possibly but see their native contrariety to God and his holy law. The Israelites of old felt their contrariety to their prophets, and they hated them, and put them to death; and the Pharisees felt their contrariety to Christ and his apostles, and hated them, and put them to death; for they perceived what their prophets, and what Christ and his apostles, were driving at: but yet, all the while, they imagined they loved God, and loved his law, because they neither knew God, nor understood his law: and even so it is at this day: If an *Arminian*, or *Pelagian*, (for, after all their pretences, they are, by nature, just like the rest of mankind), did but verily believe God just such an one as the godly man, in fact, sees him to be, he would feel as great a

contrariety to him, and enmity against him, as any *Calvanist* ever supposed there was in natural men. They frame a false image of God in their own fancies, to suit the vitiated taste of their corrupt hearts, and then cry, *We are not enemies to God; no, but it is natural for us to love him:* when, all the while, their native aversion to God will not so much as suffer them to believe that there is *any such Being* as *really* he is. But, to proceed,

The aforesaid disposition, and bent of heart, which is thus directly contrary to the law, *is exceedingly sinful:* For, while we love ourselves supremely, and live to ourselves ultimately, we do really, in our hearts, and by our practice, prefer ourselves above God, as if we were more excellent and worthy: in which we cast infinite contempt on the Lord of glory, in as much as all the nations are, in his sight, but as a drop of the bucket, and small dust of the balance, and we, compared with him, are less than nothing, and vanity. He is of infinite majesty, greatness, glory, and excellency, and all heaven adore him in the most humble prostrations; and yet we, *mean* worms of the dust...yea, *vile* worms of the dust, that deserve every moment to be spurned to hell, even *we* esteem and love ourselves more than we do him, and are more concerned for our interest than for his honor; yea, care not at all for him, or his honor, nor would ever so much as pretend to it, if not excited thereto from the expectation of self-advantage: and that, even although we receive life and breath, and all things from him, and his right to us is original, underived, perfect, and entire. Surely this is infinite wickedness! and besides, in being and doing so, we affront his sacred authority, whereby, as Governor of the world, he commands us to love him with all our hearts. And further, while we are inclined to take our whole delight in that which is not God.... to forsake him, the fountain of living waters, the ocean of all good, and seek comfort and content elsewhere; we hereby prefer the world above God—prefer our wives and children....our houses, and lands, and pleasures, above God—or, at best, we prefer (an imaginary) heaven above God: to do either of which, casts infinite contempt upon the Lord of glory....the delight of

angels....the joy of the heavenly world. The Psalmist said, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing on earth I desire besides thee*....Psalm lxxiii. 25 ; and well might he say so : but to be inclined, when we are secure in sin, and not terrified with hell, to love and desire any thing upon earth more than God—and, when under terrors and fearful expectations of wrath, to desire pardon, peace, and (an imaginary) heaven, and any thing to make us happy, but God himself, is surely infinitely vile. We do hereby prefer that which is not God, above God himself, as if it was really of more worth ; and so cast infinite contempt upon the ocean of blessedness, and fountain of all good. And besides, in this, as well as the former particular, we go directly contrary to the express command of the great Governor of the whole world. Finally, to be disposed to an inordinate (and so to a groundless) self-love, and to be swallowed up in selfish views and designs, instead of a tender love, and cordial benevolence to all our fellow-men, loving them as ourselves, is evidently contrary to all the reason and nature of things, and to the express command of God, which is infinitely binding ; and so this also is infinitely sinful : And thus, these, our native propensities, are directly contrary to the holy law of God, and exceedingly sinful.

But here it may be enquired—"If a disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and to delight in "that *which is not God* wholly, be so exceedingly sinful, whence "is it that men's *consciences* do not any more *accuse* and *condemn* "them therefor ?" To which the answer is plain and easy ; *for this is evidently owing to their intolerably mean thoughts of God.* Mal. i. 6, 7, 8....*A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master : If, then, I be a father, where is mine honor ? And if I be a master, where is my fear ? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name : and ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name ? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar ;* (and so ye despise me :) *and* (yet) *ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee ?* (I answer) *In that* (in doing so) *ye* (practically) *say, The table of the Lord is contemptible :* (and so you treat me

with contempt.) And yet their consciences did not smite them, and therefore the Lord adds—*And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?* (or am I so mean and contemptible, that to do so ought not to be looked upon as an affront? I appeal to the common sense of mankind,) *Offer it now unto thy Governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts;* (and if your Governor will take it as an affront, much more may I,) *for I am a* GREAT KING, *saith the* LORD *of hosts*, (ver. 14.) Here it is plain that it was their mean and contemptuous thoughts of God which made them think it would do to turn him off any how, and with any thing: And just so it is in the case before us: men's thoughts of God are infinitely mean.... he is very contemptible in their sight; and hence, although they love themselves, their own honor and interest, above the Lord and his glory, and prefer other things, and take more delight in that which is not God, than in God himself, yet they say—"Wherein do we despise the Lord, affront his majesty, or cast "contempt upon him? We pray in secret and in our families.... "we go to meeting and to sacrament, and help to support the "gospel; and is not all this to honor the Lord? And wherein "do we despise him?"—Just as if going into your closet twice a day, to quiet your conscience, and saying over the old prayer, by rote, in your family, that you have repeated morning and evening ever since you kept house; and, in a customary way, going to meeting and to sacrament, and paying your minister's rate, (and, it may be, not without grudging,)—just as if *this* was an *honoring* of God, when, at heart, you do not love him one jot, nor care for his honor and interest at all, nor would do any thing in religion but for the influence of education and common custom, or from legal fears and mercenary hopes, or merely from some other selfish consideration: Yea, just as if this was an *honoring* of God, when, all the time, you cast such infinite contempt upon him in your heart, as to give your heart to *another*—to that which is not God—to yourself, and to the world! Let a woman treat her husband so, will he be pleased with it, and

will he accept her person? If she does not love her husband at all, or delight in his person, or care for his interest—if she loves another man....has a separate interest of her own, and does nothing for her husband but to serve her own views, will he now think she is a *good wife*, because morning, noon, and night, she prepares his food, though she does it carelessly, the victuals always cold and poorly dressed, hardly fit to eat....and he knows it is all from want of love? And besides, she thinks she does a *great deal* for him, and expects her *pay*, like a *hired maid!*—and she says to her husband, "Wherein do I despise you? Am "not I always doing for you?" And she does not feel herself to blame, because her husband looks so mean and contemptible in her eyes; and she cares so little for him, that any thing seems good enough for him, while, all the time, her adulterous heart is doating on her lovers. "You do not love me," says her husband, "but other men have your heart, and you are more a *wife* "to them than to me:" But says she, "I cannot love you, and "I cannot but love others;" and now she seems to herself not to blame: So, a wicked world have such mean thoughts of God, that they cannot love him at all, and have such high thoughts of themselves, that they cannot but love themselves supremely: they have such mean thoughts of God that they cannot delight in him at all; but they see a glory in other things, and so in them they cannot but delight wholly: And because they are habitually insensible of God's infinite glory, hence they are habitually insensible of the *exceeding sinfulness* of these native propensities of their hearts: So that we see that mean, contemptuous thoughts of God are the very foundation of the peace, and quiet, and security of men, in a mere form of religion. If they did but see *who the Lord is*, they could not but judge themselves and all their duties to be infinitely odious in his sight. *Psalm* l. 21, 22....*These things hast thou done, and I kept silence—thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes....Now consider this, ye that forget God.* Men have such mean thoughts of God, and so little regard him, that they are naturally inclined to *for-*

get that there is a God, and to feel and act as if there were none. Hence (*Psalm* xiv. 1.)—*The fool saith in his heart, there is no God;* i. e. he is inclined to feel and act as if there was none ; and, therefore, it is added in the next words—*Corrupt are they.* So, the children of Eli, who treated the worship of God with great contempt, are said *to despise the Lord, and kick at his sacrifice ;* and yet their consciences did not smite them : and the ground of all was *their mean, contemptuous thoughts of God.* I. Sam. ii. 12, 29, 30....*The sons of Eli were sons of Belial, they knew not the Lord.* And thus we see that our native disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight wholly in that which is not God, is (whether we are sensible of it, or not,) directly contrary to God's holy law, and exceedingly sinful. And I add,

This native bent of our hearts *is the root of all sin*, (the *positive* root, I mean, in opposition to a mere *privative* cause) of all our inward corruptions and vicious practices....both of those which are contrary to the *first* and to the *second table* of the law—of those which more immediately affront God, and of those which more especially respect our neighbor.

From this root arises all our evil carriage *towards the Lord of glory.* This is the root *of a spirit of self-supremacy,* whereby we, in our hearts, exalt ourselves and our wills above the Lord and his will, and refuse to be controuled by him, or be in subjection unto him. Jehovah assumes the character of most high God, supreme Lord and sovereign Governor of the whole world, and commands all the earth to acknowledge and obey him as such ; but we are all naturally inclined, Pharaoh-like, to say, *Who is the Lord, that we should obey him ? we know not the Lord, nor will we do his will :* And hence mankind, all the world over, break God's law, every day, before his face ; as if they despised his authority in their hearts. And when he crosses them in his providences, they, as though it was not his right to govern the world, quarrel with him, because they cannot have their *own wills*, and go in their *own ways :* This was always the way of the children of Israel, those forty years in

the wilderness, whose whole conduct exemplifies our nature to the life, and in which glass we may behold our faces, and know what manner of persons we naturally are. Men love themselves above God, and do not like his law, and hence are inclined to set up their wills above and against his; and if they *can*, they *will*, have their wills, and go in their ways, for all him; and if they *cannot*, they will quarrel with him: And hence the apostle says, *The carnal mind is enmity against God—is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be*....Rom. viii. 7.

And, from this root, arises *a spirit of self-sufficiency and independence*, whereby we are lifted up in our own hearts, and hate to be beholden to God; and, having different interests and ends from him, naturally think it not safe, and so, upon the whole, not liking to trust in him, choose to trust in ourselves, or any thing, rather than him. We have a better thought of ourselves than of God, as knowing we are disposed to be true to our own interests and ends, and therefore had rather trust in ourselves than in him; and besides, we naturally hate to come upon our knees to him for every thing: Hence, that in *Jer.* ii. 31. is the native language of our hearts—*We are lords, we will come no more unto thee.* We love to have the staff in our own hands, for then we can do as we will; and hate to lie at God's mercy, for then we must be at his control; yea, we had rather trust in any thing than in God, he being, of all things, most contrary to us: And hence, the Israelites, in their distress, would one while make a covenant with Assyria, and then lean upon Egypt; yea, and rob the treasures of the temple to hire their aid, rather than be beholden to God: Yea, they would make them Gods of silver and gold....of wood and stone, and then trust in such lying vanities, rather than in the Lord Jehovah: *And as face answers to face in the water, so does the heart of man to man*....Prov. xxvii. 19. This is our very nature.

Again, from the same root arises a *disposition to depart from the Lord;* for other things appear more glorious, and excellent, and soul-satisfying than God—wherefore the hearts of the children of men secretly loathe the Lord, and hanker after other

things, and so go away from God to them. Job xxi. 12, 14.... *They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ : Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*—Mal. iii. 14, 15....*It is in vain to serve God : and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? We call the proud happy.* Meditation and prayer are a burden to men ; they had rather be almost any where than in their closets, because they secretly loathe the Lord : but in other things they find comfort....one in his farm, and another in his merchandize....the young man in his frolics, and with his merry companions....the old man in his wife, and children, and cattle, and swine, and house, and lands....the rich man in his riches ....the ambitious man in his honors....the scholar in his books.... the man of contemplation in his nice speculations ; and, in any thing, men can take more comfort than in God himself. That which angels and saints in heaven, and believers on earth, prize above all things, men have naturally the least account of : Psal. lxxiii. 25....*Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is nothing on earth I desire besides thee.*—Jer. ii. 5, 11, 12, 13....*Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and become vain ? Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods ? But my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit : Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*

And, from the whole, we may see there is the greatest contrariety between the nature of God and the nature of the sinner : and hence God hates sinners (*Hab.* i. 13.)—and sinners hate him (*Rom.* viii. 7.)—and when sinners come to die, and go into the eternal world, they will *feel* then that they hate him, though their nature *then* will be just the same as it is *now* ; and they will then know that the great reason they did not *feel* their hatred of him in this world, was because they did not *think* nor wou'd *believe* that he was *such an one.*

And hence we may see whence it is that we are so averse to right apprehensions of God, and whence it is that our insensibility of his glory, in being what he is, is so invincible, *viz.* because he is, in his very nature, in such perfect contrariety to us, and we to him ; for to account that infinitely glorious in being what it is, which is of a nature perfectly contrary to us, is as unnatural as to account ourselves infinitely hateful in being what we are ; for *that* necessarily implies *this :* So far, therefore, as sinners love themselves for being what they are, so far do they hate God for being what he is ; and so far as they hate God for being what he is, so far their insensibility of his infinite glory, in being just such an one, is invincible : And now, since men, naturally, perfectly love themselves for being what they are, and, consequently, perfectly hate God for being what he is—hence, their minds are, naturally, perfectly prejudiced against the true knowledge of God, and perfectly averse from, and insusceptible of a sense of his infinite glory in being just what he is : And hence it is, that neither God's word nor works, nor any thing but his almighty spirit, can make men, in their hearts, both really give into it that God is just such an one as he is, and infinitely glorious in being such. The heavens may declare the glory of the Lord, and make the invisible things of God clearly to be seen ; and the scriptures and ministers may proclaim his greatness and glory, and the honor of his majesty ; but sinners, in seeing, will not see, and, in hearing, will not hear and understand, for they do not like to have God in their knowledge : They hate the light, and love darkness ; they hate to think that God should be such an one....can see no glory in him in being such....secretly wish he was another kind of a being.... dread to think that he is what he is, and will not, if they can help it....*John* iii. 19, 20—*Rom.* i. 28—*John* viii. 43, 47. That God should love himself more than he does his sinful creatures, and value his own honor and interest more than he does our happiness, and look upon it as an infinite affront that we are not exactly of the same mind, and judge us worthy of eternal damnation therefor, and, as high Governor of the world, make such

a law, and bind us to it, to do so—how can this suit a proud rebel, that only loves himself and his own interest, and cares not for God at all? How can a carnal, selfish heart delight in such a God, and account him infinitely glorious in being such? How can he rejoice to hear that he sits King forever, and does all things according to the counsel of his own will, aiming ultimately at his own glory? Or how can he imagine that such a conduct, so directly cross to his temper, is infinitely right and becoming, glorious and excellent? The temper, the *bad* temper of sinners' hearts, is that which renders their insensibility of God's glory, in being what he is, so invincible. He does not suit them—he does not look upon things as they do—he is not disposed, nor does he act as they would have him, but all directly contrary....as contrary as light and darkness—as sin and holiness—as heaven and hell: Therefore, *the carnal mind is enmity against God.* But, to return,

From this same root—this disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, *proceeds all our evil carriage towards our neighbor.* Pride, selfishness, and worldliness, lay the foundation for all that cheating, lying, backbiting, quarrelling, there is among neighbors—and for all the feuds and bloody wars there ever have been among all the nations of the earth, from the beginning of the world: And pride, selfishness, and worldliness, together with that enmity against God and true religion, which is naturally concomitant, lay the foundation for all those bloody persecutions which have been, in the several ages of the world, against the church and people of God. If men were not proud nor selfish, they would have no inclination to injure their neighbors, in name or estate: If they took their supreme delight in God, as the portion of their souls, they would not have any of their little petty idols to quarrel and contend about: If they loved their neighbors as themselves, there would never more be any thing like persecution; and all injuries and abuses would cease from the earth: So that, to conclude, as a disposition to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves,

is an habitual conformity to the whole law, and lays a solid foundation for a right carriage towards God and our neighbor, in all things—so a disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, is an habitual contrariety to the whole law, and lays a sad foundation for all evil carriage towards God and our fellow-men. And, as I said, this disposition is natural to us, and we are naturally entirely under the government of it: and so the seed and root of all sin is in us, even in the native temper of our hearts: *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.*

OBJ. *But if mankind neither love God nor their neighbors with a genuine love, such as the law requires, but naturally have, and are entirely under the government of, a spirit of contrariety to the whole law, whence is it that all men do not blaspheme God, and do all the mischief they can, and, in practice, as well as in nature, be as bad as devils?*

ANS. Because of the *restraints*, which God, for wise ends and purposes, is pleased to lay upon them, whereby their nature is, indeed, not at all altered, but only, in a measure, kept from breaking out, as otherwise it would do. And these restraints, in ordinary, are such as arise from these things:—(1.) From their *animal constitution;* whereby many are inclined to be tender-hearted, compassionate, and kind, without any regard to God or duty, from a sort of natural instinct, much of the same nature, to all appearance, as is to be found in many in the brutal world. (2.) From *natural affection;* whereby, partly from animal nature, and partly from self-love, and from being brought up together, relatives have a certain fondness for one another, and so are disposed to be kind to one another, and that without any regard to God or duty; much as it is with many in the brutal world. (3.) From a *good education;* whereby many are influenced to be civil in their behavior, honest in their dealings, kind to the poor, and to pray in their families, and join with the church, &c. though destitute of grace in their hearts. (4.) From *worldly considerations;* whereby, from self-love, in order to avoid punishment from men, or from fear of disgrace and

reproach, or to get the good-will of others, or promote some worldly interest, men are influenced, sometimes, to carry themselves, externally, very well. (5.) From *religious considerations;* whereby, from self-love, the fear of hell, and the hope of heaven, many are influenced to do much in religion. (6.) *Want* of *speculative knowledge* of GOD....ignorance of his resolution to punish sin, and of his anger against them, is also an occasion of their not blaspheming his name; as they will do, as soon as ever they come into eternity, and see how things really are; though then their nature will be exactly the same that it is now. God gives rain and fruitful seasons, and fills the hearts of all with food and gladness; he makes his sun rise, and rain fall upon the evil and unthankful, and offers salvation in case they repent and believe; whence men are ready to think that God loves them, and this restrains them. These, and such-like things, restrain men's corruptions; but for which, they would be as bad in this world as they will be in the next, when these restraints come to be taken off.

To what has been said, may also be added, that God, by these three methods, does much to restrain many:—(1.) *By his providence*; whereby he many times brings remarkable judgments upon men for their sins; and remarkably prospers men, as to the things of this world, who are true to their word, and honest in their dealings: and hereby men are afraid to be and do as bad as otherwise they would, lest some judgment should come upon them; and others are influenced to be honest, and to carry themselves, externally, well, in hopes of a worldly blessing. (2.) *By his word*—his written word, and his word preached; whereby men are made more sensible that there is a heaven and a hell; and so are the more restrained and kept in awe. (3.) *By his spirit;* whereby he does much to make many a man sensible of the evil of sin, the dreadfulness of damnation, and the glory of heaven, whom he never sanctifies: whereby they are not only restrained from vicious practices, but their corruptions also are greatly stunned, and they made zealous promoters of religion....(*Heb.* vi. 4.) And

thus the supreme Governor of the world restrains men's corruptions, and maintains some degree of order among his rebellious subjects.

But yet, all these restraints notwithstanding, there is, and always has been, abundance of wickedness committed in this apostate world. They have murdered God's servants, the prophets, whom the Lord has sent unto them, rising early and sending; and they have killed his Son, and his apostles, and shed the blood of thousands and millions of his saints. So great has been their aversion to God! and so great their cruelty! And by the many wars there have been among the nations, from the beginning, the whole earth has been filled with blood. And by cheating, and lying, and backbiting, and contention, &c. *hateful and hating one another*, innumerable injuries have been done to, and unspeakable miseries brought upon, one another. And as soon as ever mankind have their restraints taken off at death, without having any sin infused into their nature, they will appear to be what they are—they will feel and act like very *devils*.

But, in the mean while, by means of these restraints, many *deceive* themselves; for our corruptions being thus capable of being restrained, and, as it were, stunned, and our lives of being pretty well regulated, to appearance, while our nature remains the same, and we feeling ourselves able to do considerable towards this—hence many are deceived, and take this to be real religion, and think they did, and that others may convert themselves, with but comparatively little assistance from God's spirit: And truly so they might, if this was true religion, and conversion consisted in thus reforming our lives, and restraining our corruptions: But, in conversion, our very nature must be changed, (II *Cor.* v. 17.)—the native bent of our hearts must be turned, (*Ezek.* xxxvi. 26.); and from this we are naturally wholly averse: And hence arises the absolute necessity of a supernatural, irresistible grace, in order to our conversion;—of which more afterwards. But to return,

From what has been said, we see that we are natively disposed to love ourselves supremely....to live to ourselves ultimate-

ly, and delight in that which is not God, wholly; and that this disposition, by which we are, naturally, entirely governed, in all things, and under all circumstances, is in direct contrariety to the holy law of God, and is exceedingly sinful, and is the root of all sin....of all our evil carriage towards God and man, in heart and life: So that, as to have a disposition to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves, is a radical conformity to the whole law—so this contrary disposition is a radical contrariety to the whole law: Well, therefore, may the holy scriptures speak of sinners as being *dead in sin*, and *at enmity against God*, and, *by nature*, *children of wrath*, and represent them so frequently as being *enemies to God*, (*Eph.* ii. 1, 3—*Rom.* viii. 7, and v. 10—II. *Cor.* v. 18—20.) since, by comparing ourselves with the holy law of God, we are found to be, *in fact*, natively so, in the temper of our minds: And it will be forever in vain for mankind to plead *not guilty*, since the law of God *is what it is*, and *we are what we are*; for, by the law, *by which is the knowledge of sin*, we *evidently* stand condemned.

Here it may be *objected*, "That we are, natively, *no other-* "*wise than God makes us*; and if, therefore, we are natively "sinful, God made us so; and, by consequence, is the *author* "*of sin*." But this *objection* has been already obviated; for, as has been observed, God only creates the naked essence of our souls....our natural faculties....a power to think, and will, and to love, and hate; and this *evil bent* of our hearts *is not of his making*, but is the *spontaneous propensity* of our *own wills*; for we, being born devoid of the divine image, ignorant of God, and insensible of his glory, do, of *our own accord*, turn to ourselves, and the things of time and sense, and to any thing that suits a graceless heart, and there all our affections centre; from whence we natively become averse to God, and to all that which is spiritually good, and inclined to all sin: So that the *positive* corruption of our nature is not any thing created by God, but arises *merely* from a *privative* cause.

Here it will be *objected* again, "That it is not consistent with "the divine perfections to bring mankind into the world under

"such sad and unhappy circumstances."—*But who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou formed me thus?* It is blasphemous to say, that it is not consistent with the divine perfections to do what God, IN FACT, does. It is a plain *matter of fact*, that we are born into the world devoid of the divine image, ignorant of God, insensible of his infinite glory: And it is a plain *matter of fact*, that, in consequence hereof, we are natively disposed to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God, wholly: And it is plain, to a demonstration, that this temper is in direct contrariety to God's holy law....is exceedingly sinful, and is the root of all wickedness.—*Now*, to say it is not consistent with the divine perfections that mankind should be brought into the world, as, IN FACT, they are, is wickedly to fly in the face of our almighty Creator, and expressly charge him with unrighteousness; which, surely, does not become us. If we cannot see into this dispensation of divine providence, yet we ought to remember, that God is *holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works*, and that *the judge of all the earth always does right.* I do not mean that things are *therefore* right, *merely* because God does them; for if they were not right to be done, antecedently to his doing of them, he would not, he could not do them: But I mean, that when it is *a plain matter of fact* that God does such a thing, we may thence conclude that it is most certainly right for him to do so, although we cannot understand *how* it is. We ought to remember that he is infinite in his understanding, and, at one comprehensive view, beholds all things, and so cannot but know what is right, and what is wrong, in all cases; and his judgment is unbiassed....the rectitude of his nature is perfect: he cannot, therefore, but do right always, and, in all instances, govern the world in righteousness. But our minds are narrow and contracted—we are but of yesterday, and know nothing; and besides, our judgments are biassed through our mean thoughts of God, and high thoughts of ourselves; and hence we may be easily mistaken: Especially, in this case, our minds

are sadly biassed, and it is almost impossible for us to consider the matter with a spirit of disinterested impartiality: And these considerations ought to check our rising thoughts, and make us lie down in the dust before the great, and righteous, and good Governor of the world, with humble silence, even although we cannot understand his ways: And I believe that a humble disposition of heart would lay an effectual foundation for us to come to be satisfied in this matter—it being our mean thoughts of God, and high thoughts of ourselves, which blinds our minds that we cannot see, and disposes us to quarrel with our Creator, and find fault with the Ruler and disposer of the world. It is true, that the holy scriptures consider mankind as being what they are, and say but little about the way in which they came to be in such a condition: And there is good reason for it; for it is of infinitely greater importance that we should know what a condition we are in, than how we came into it: And it is a foolish thing for us, and contrary to common sense, to lay the blame any where but upon ourselves, since we are *voluntarily* such as we are, and really *love* to be what we are—do not sincerely desire to be otherwise, but are utterly averse from it.—But yet the holy scriptures say so much about the way of our coming into our present condition, as might fully satisfy our minds, were not our judgments biassed; for from them we learn, that *man was made upright....was created in God's image*, and, by *rebelling against his Maker*, *brought a curse upon himself and all his race*....Gen. i. 27—Eccle. vii. 29—Rom. v. 12—19. *There* we read, that *by one man*, *sin entered into the world—that by one man's disobedience*, *many were made sinners—that by the offence of one*, *judgment came upon all men to condemnation.* Adam was created in the image of God—it was connatural to him to love God with all his heart, and this would have been our case, had he not rebelled against God; but now we are born devoid of the divine image—have no heart for God—are transgressors from the womb....*by nature children of wrath.*

And if any should enquire, "But can it be right that Ad-
"am's sin should have any influence upon us?"

I *answer*—It is a plain case that it *actually* has, and we may depend upon it that the Judge of all the earth always does right. And besides, why might not God make Adam our public head and representative, to act in our room, as he has since, for our recovery, made his *own Son* our public head and representative? ....*Rom.* v. 12—21. He had as much *right*, *power*, and *authority* for one as for the other: and was not Adam as likely to remain obedient as any of us should have been, and, in some respects, more likely? His natural powers were ripe; he stood not only for himself, but for all his race;—a whole world lay at stake: And if he had kept the covenant of his God, and secured happiness to all his race, should we not forever have blessed God for so good a constitution? Never once should we have questioned God's *right* and *authority* to make him our public head and representative, or have thought that it did not become his wisdom and goodness to trust our all in his hands. And if we should thus have approved this constitution, had Adam never sinned, why might we not as justly approve it now, if we would be but disinterestedly impartial? It is the same, in itself, *now*, that it would have been *then*....every way as holy, just, and good.—"Oh, but for God to damn a whole world for one sin!" But stay—does not this arise from mean thoughts of God, and high thoughts of yourself? O, think who the Lord is! and what it is for a worm to rise in rebellion against him! and how he treated whole thousands of *glorious angels* for their first sin! and then, think how God drowned the *old world*,...burnt *Sodom*...,and of the dreadful things he intends to do to the impenitent at the day of judgment! and learn, and believe, that sin is an infinitely greater evil than we naturally imagine.

But I must return to my subject, for it is not my present business so much to show *how we came into this condition*, as plainly to point out *what that condition is*, *which we are actually in*. As to this, the whole scriptures are very plain; but especially the *law*, *by which is the knowledge of sin*, clearly discovers what our case is, and, beyond dispute, proves that *all are under sin*.

And having already, by comparing ourselves with the law, found out what our nature is, I proceed to make some further observations, in which I design greater brevity.

4. From what has been said, we may learn *that the very best religious performances of all unregenerate men are*, complexly considered, *sinful, and so, odious in the sight of God.* They may do many things *materially good*, but the *principle, end*, and *manner* of them are such, as that, *complexly considered*, what they do is *sin* in the sight of God: For *sin is a transgression of the law.* But,

(1.) The law requires all mankind to do every duty out of love to God, and for his glory: But all unregenerate persons, *directly contrary to law*, do every duty merely out of love to themselves, and for self-ends; and so, *are guilty of rebellion.*

(2.) The law requires all mankind to do every duty out of love to God, and for his glory: But all unregenerate persons do every duty merely out of love to themselves, and for self-ends; whereby they *prefer themselves*, and *their interest*, *above God* and *his glory;* and so, *are guilty of spiritual idolatry.*

(3.) The law requires all mankind to do every duty from love to God, and for his glory: But all unregenerate persons do every duty merely from self-love, and for self-ends; and yet *hypocritically pretend* to God, that they *love* and *obey him;* and so, *are guilty of mocking God.*

(4.) The law supposes that God *infinitely deserves* to be loved with all our hearts, and obeyed in every thing, and that our neighbor *deserves* to be loved as ourselves; and that, therefore, if we should yield perfect obedience in all things, yet we should *deserve no thanks:* But all unregenerate persons make *much* of their duties, though such miserable, poor things; and so, *affront God to his very face.*

Upon these *four accounts*, their very best performances are done in a manner directly contrary to the law of God, and so are sinful, and therefore odious in the sight of God: (*Prov.* xv. 8, and xxi. 27—*Rom.* viii. 8—*Psalm* lxxxviii. 36, 37.) As is the tree, so is the fruit—as is the fountain, so are the streams; and

as is the man, so are his doings, in the sight of God, who looks at the heart, (*Mat.* xii. 33, 34, 35,) and judges not according to appearance, but judges righteous judgment; and with whom many things, that are highly esteemed among men, are abomination.

And if their best religious performances are thus odious in the sight of God, it is certain that they cannot possibly, in the nature of things, have the least tendency to make amends for their past sins, or recommend them to the divine favor; but rather tend to provoke God still more: So that *it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.* Nor is there the least hope in the sinner's case, but what arises from the sovereign mercy of God; whereby he can *have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and have compassion on whom he will have compassion*....Rom. ix. 15, 18.

True, some, being ignorant of the law, and of our entire contrariety to it, have fancied a goodness in the sinner's duties; and hence have persuaded themselves that there are promises of special grace made to them:—Not that there are any promises in scripture, of that nature; for the scripture every where considers us as being, while unregenerate, *dead in sin*....Eph. ii. 1—*Enemies to God*....Rom. v. 10—II. Cor. v. 17—20—Col. i. 21—yea, *enmity against him*....Rom. viii. 7—and so far from any true and acceptable obedience to God, as that we *are not*, nor *can be* subject to the law, and so *cannot please God* ....Rom. viii. 7, 8—and every where represents such as being under *the wrath of God....the curse of the law*, and *a present condemnation*....John iii. 18, 36—Rom. i. 18—Gal. iii. 10. But the real ground of their opinion is, their ignorance of the sinner's sinful, guilty circumstances, and their fond conceit that there is some real goodness in what the sinner does;—both which are owing to their ignorance of the law,* and of the nature of

* It is manifest that this notion of the promises, of which *Pelagius* was the author, and which was condemned for heresy above 1300 years ago, did, with him, and does, with his followers, take its rise, originally, from their ignorance of the nature and meaning of the moral law. But yet some good men may have been inadvertently led into this error by the force of

true holiness....*Rom.* vii. 8, 9—*Rom.* x. 3. All will own, that if sinners' duties are such as I have represented, it is absurd, and even inconsistent with the divine perfections, that promises of special grace should be made to them.

It is true they refer to Mat. xxv. 29....*To him that hath, shall be given.* But that text evidently speaks of the final rewards which shall be given to the godly at the day of judgment; when all the unregenerate shall, with *the slothful servant, be cast into outer darkness.* They quote also Mat. vii. 7....*Ask and you shall receive*, &c. But the condition of this promise was never yet performed by an unregenerate sinner: For this *asking* is meant *right asking;* for those who *ask amiss*, receive nothing ....*James* iv. 3. *Right asking* of grace, supposes *right desires* of it; but the unregenerate are, in the habitual temper of their hearts, directly contrary to grace and all spiritual good, and entirely so, as has been proved: But to have *genuine desires* after a thing, and a *perfect contrariety* to it, in the whole heart, at the same time, is an express contradiction. The reason that sinners many times *think* that they *love* holiness, and *desire heartily and sincerely* to be *made* holy, is, that they, being ignorant of the nature of true holiness, have framed a *false image* of it in their own fancies. Did they but distinctly know *the very thing itself*, their native contrariety to it could no longer be hid....*Rom.* vii. 8, 9. So the Pharisees thought they loved God, and loved his law; although, at the same time, they perfectly hated the Son of God, who was the express image of his Father, and came into the world to do honor to his Father's law. They had wrong notions of God, and of his law.

Obj. *But this tends to drive sinners to despair.*

Ans. Only to despair of being saved by their own righteousness, which they must be driven to, or they will never submit to be saved by free grace through Jesus Christ...*Rom.* vii. 8, 9, and x. 3.

education. I believe men's hearts may be sometimes better than their heads: but when a false scheme of religion does perfectly suit a man's heart, and express the temper of his mind, then, no doubt, he is graceless ....II. *John* ix. and *John* viii. 47. The above notion of the promises perfectly suits a self-righteous heart.

OBJ. *But, if these things be true, there is not any motive to excite a poor sinner to reform, or pray, or read, or do any thing.*

ANS. By which it is plain, that a sinner cares not a jot for God, and will not go one step in religion, only for what he can get: and if such a sinner had ever so many motives, he would only serve himself, but not serve God at all. And what encouragement can God, consistent with his honor, give to such an one, since he merits hell every moment, even by his best duties, but only that which St. Peter gave to Simon Magus? Acts viii. 22....*Repent, and pray to God, if* PERADVENTURE *the* wickedness *of thy heart may be forgiven thee.*

OBJ. *But this way of reasoning will make sinners leave off seeking and striving, and sit down discouraged.*

ANS. Not if sinners are but effectually awakened to see how dreadful damnation is; for a bare *who can tell?* will make such resolve to run, and fight, and strive, and beg, and pray, till they die; and if they perish, to perish at God's foot: And as for others, all their courage arises from their not seeing what wretched, miserable, sinful, guilty creatures they are; and so must be dashed to pieces, sooner or later, in this world or the next, whenever their eyes come to be opened. And if God ever, in this world, shows them what they are, they will thereby perceive what danger they are in: and *now* a mere *who can tell?* will make them also resolve to run for eternal salvation, till their very last breath. It is best that false confidence should be killed; and this way of reasoning does not, in the least, tend to hurt any other: It is best that sinners should know the worst of their case; and this way of reasoning does not tend to make it appear a jot worse than it is.

OBJ. *But what good does it do for sinners to be in such earnest to reform, read, watch, pray, run, fight, strive, as for their lives, since all they do is sin, and God will have mercy* only *on whom he will have mercy.*

ANS. (1.) It is less sin to do these things, than not to do them.

(2.) Sinners never will be in such earnest, only when God comes to awaken and convince, and so to make them effectual-

ly sensible of the dreadful state they are in ; and it is not any discouragements that can keep them from being in such earnest *then*, so long as the least hope appears in their case. Other people care but little about eternal things, and do but very little in religion, but what education, custom, the fashion, and their worldly interest, excite them unto. Most people think it so easy a thing to be saved, as that they look upon such great concern and earnestness as perfect frenzy.

(3.) This great earnestness of awakened sinners makes them try their strength to purpose ; whereby they come to be experimentally convinced that it is not in their hearts to love God, be sorry for sin, or do any thing that is good ; whereby the high conceit they used to have of their ability and good nature is brought down, and they feel and find that they are enemies to God, and dead in sin : and hereby a foundation is laid for them to see the justice of God in their damnation, and so the reasonableness of God's having mercy only on whom he will have mercy : And thus, the law, though it *cannot give life*, yet is a *school-master to bring men to Christ :* And thus the main good the awakened sinner gets, by going to this *school-master*, is effectually to learn his need of Christ, and of the free grace of God through him....*Rom.* vii. 8, 9....*Gal.* iii. 21—24 : This is the great end God has in view, and this end all the sinner's earnest strivings are well calculated to obtain.

5. From what has been said, we may learn *the nature of a saving conversion, and the manner wherein it it wrought.* Conversion consists in our being recovered, from our present sinfulness, to the moral image of God ; or, which is the same thing, to a real conformity to the moral law : But a conformity to the moral law consists in a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively—and to love our neighbor as ourselves....and a practice agreeable thereto : And therefore conversion consists in our being recovered from what we are by nature, to such a disposition and practice.

And now, in order to such a glorious renovation and recovery, God, by his spirit, sets home the law upon the sinner's heart,

causing him to see and feel, to purpose, just how he has lived, and what he is, and what he deserves, and how he is in the hands of a sovereign God, and at his disposal; whereby the hindrances which were in the way of his conversion, are, in a sort, removed. Rom. vii. 8, 9....*For without the law, sin was dead: For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died:* And then God, *who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in the heart, and gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*....II. Cor. iv. 6. And now a sense of the glory of God and divine things being thus imparted to the soul by the spirit of God, and the sinner being raised up from spiritual death to spiritual life, does return home to God through Jesus Christ, venturing his soul and immortal concerns upon the free grace of God, and through him gives up himself to God, to be his forever—to love him supremely—live to him entirely, and delight in him superlatively, and forever to walk in all his ways: and hereby, at the same time, the man's heart begins to be habitually framed to love his neighbor as himself, with a disinterested impartiality; and thus an effectual foundation is laid for universal external obedience, and that from genuine principles.

And as the divine life is thus begun, so it is carried on in the soul much after the same manner. The spirit of God shews the believer, more and more, what a poor, sinful, hell-deserving wretch he is in himself, and so makes him more and more sensible of his absolute need of free grace, through Jesus Christ, to pardon and to sanctify him. He grows in a sense of these things all his days; whereby his heart is kept humble, and Christ and free grace made more precious. The spirit of God shews the believer, more and more, of the infinite glory and excellency of God, whereby he is more and more influenced to love him, live to him, and delight in him with all his heart: and, by the whole, his heart is framed more and more to love his neighbor as himself: And thus *the path of the just is like a shining light, that shines more and more, to the perfect day*, (Prov. iv. 18.); only, it must be observed, that the spirit's operations,

after conversion, are attended with two differences, arising from two causes :—(1.) From the *different state* of the subject wrought upon. The believer not being under the law as a covenant, is not, by the spirit, filled with those legal terrors arising from the fears of hell, as heretofore he was....*Rom.* viii. 15 ; but only is made sensible of his remaining sinfulness, and the sinfulness and desert of sin, and of God's fatherly displeasure ; and hereby his heart is humbled and broken : Indeed, hereby he is many times filled with unspeakable anguish and bitterness of soul. *His sins are ever before his eyes, and his bones wax old through his roaring all the day long*....Psalm xxiii. 3, and li. 3. *He is troubled....he is bowed down greatly....he goes mourning all the day long*....Psalm xxxviii. 1—6. But these awakening, convincing, humbling, mourning, purifying times, always end in peace and joy, and rest in God—attended with a greater degree of tenderness of conscience and holy watchfulness, and followed with bringing forth more fruit....*Psalm* xcvii. 11, and cxxvi. 5, 6.—*Psalm* xxxii. 5, and lxxiii. 25—28.—*John* xv. 2.—II. *Cor.* vii. 10, 11.—*Heb.* xii. 11.—*Hos.* ii. 6, 7, 14, 15. (2.) From the *different nature* of the subject wrought upon. The believer not being under the full power of sin, and at perfect enmity against God, as once he was, hence does not resist the spirit with the whole heart, while he takes down the power of sin, as heretofore he did ; but has a genuine disposition to join in on God's side, and say, " Let me be effectually weaned " from the world, and humbled, and made holy and heavenly, " and be brought into an entire subjection to God in all things, " though by means and methods ever so cross to flesh and blood : " Let me be stript naked of all worldly comforts, and let *Shimei* " curse, and all outward evils and inward anguish of heart come " upon me, if nothing else will do. Here, Lord, I am in thy " hands ; chasten, correct, do what thou wilt with me, only let " sin die—sin, thine enemy, the worst evil, and the greatest " burden of *my* soul."....*Rom.* vii. 24.—II. *Cor.* iv. 8, 9, 16.—*James* i. 2.—*Psalm* cxix. 71.—*Heb.* xii. 9. And he is not only thus willing that God should, by any methods, take down the

power of sin in the heart, but also joins in with the methods of divine grace, and, by watching and praying, and by fighting and striving, seeks the death of every corruption: And from his thus joining in on God's side against the *flesh*, he is said, in scripture, *to crucify it*....Gal. v. 24—and *to work out his own salvation*....Phil. ii. 13.

From what has been said under this head, we may see that a saving conversion differs very much from the conversion of these *four* sorts of men:—(1.) *The worldly hypocrite;* who makes a profession of religion....does many things....appears zealous, and pretends to be a good man, merely from worldly considerations, and to be seen of men....*Mat.* xxiii. 5. (2.) *The legal hypocrite;* whose conversion is nothing else but a leaving off his vicious practices, and turning to be strict and conscientious in external duties, in hopes thereby to make amends for his past sins, and recommend himself to God; and so escape hell, and get to heaven....*Rom.* x. 3. (3.) *The evangelical hypocrite;* whose conversion was nothing else but this:—he was awakened to see his sins, and terrified with fear of hell, and humbled, in a measure, but not thoroughly....but great light broke into his mind, and now he believes that Christ loves him, and has pardoned all his sins, and so is filled with joy and zeal, and is become quite another man; but, still, has no grace....*Mat.* xiii. 20—*Heb.* vi. 4—II. *Pet.* ii. 20: These usually either fall away to carnal security, or, being puffed up with pride, turn enthusiasts. (4.) *The wild, blazing enthusiast*—whose conversion all arises *from imaginary notions.* He has an imaginary sight of his sin....his heart....the wrath of God ....of hell and the devil, and is terribly distressed: and then he sees Christ in a bodily shape, it may be on the cross with his blood running, or, seated on a throne of glory at his father's right hand—he sees a great light shining all round him....hears the angels sing....sees visions....hears voices....has revelations, and thinks himself one of the very best saints in the whole world, though, in truth, he, by scandalous practices, or heretical principles, or both, soon appears to be seven times more a child of

the devil than he was before : However, in his own conceit, he knows infallibly that he is right, and all the world cannot convince him to the contrary : Yea, he is fit, at once, to be a minister, though ignorant of the first principles of religion ; he is inspired by God, and whoever likes him not is an enemy to Jesus Christ, he doubts not at all. These are the tares the devil sows, by means of whom the ways of God are evil spoken of....*Mat.* xiii. 39—II. *Cor.* xi. 14—I. *Tim.* i. 7.

Now these several sorts of religion, the true and the false, growing up from these several roots, do all receive a different nourishment, according to their different nature ; through which nourishment they grow and increase ; and through the want of which they decay. *The good man*, the greater sense he has of God's infinite glory, as he has revealed himself in the law and in the gospel, so, proportionably, does his religion flourish and grow in all its various branches, and shine with a heavenly lustre : *The worldly hypocrite* lays out himself most in religion, when there are the most to observe and applaud him : *The legal hypocrite*, when his conscience is most terrified with the thoughts of death, judgment, and eternity : And *the evangelical hypocrite* has his affections raised, his love, and joy, and zeal, in proportion to his supposed discoveries of the love of Christ to him, in particular, and sense of the glories of a (fancied) heaven : And, finally, *the blazing enthusiast* is more or less lively in religion according as he has dreams, hears voices, has impressions and revelations, and is applauded by his party. And, accordingly, those different sorts of religion will grow and thrive the best under such different sorts of preaching as suits their several natures : And men will cry up those ministers most, whose preaching and conduct agree with their hearts the best. Mic. iv. 5....*For all people will walk, every one in the name of his God :* And true believers *will walk in the name of the* LORD *their* GOD.

6. From all that has been said, we may learn that a sinner is *naturally disposed to resist the spirit of God with all his might*, when he comes to awaken, convince, and humble him....to take

down the power of sin in his heart, and turn him to God.—Conversion consists in our being recovered from the sinful state we are in, by nature, to a real conformity to the divine law ; i. e. in our being recovered from a disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly....and a practice agreeable to this disposition ; —to a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, and to love our neighbors as ourselves...and a practice agreeable thereto ; i. e. in other words, in our being recovered from one disposition, to another directly contrary to it—even so contrary, that the first must die, in order to the other's existence. This disposition, from which we are to be recovered, is not any habit contracted merely by custom, which might more easily be parted with ; but it is connatural to us—a disposition rooted, as it were, in our very nature, and which has the full possession of our souls, and the entire government of our hearts ;—in a word, a disposition which we in every respect perfectly love, and which we perfectly hate should be ever crossed, and which yet must be slain, or we never converted. Now, if ever a sinner be recovered from this disposition, it is evident it must be against the very grain of his heart : his heart, therefore, will make the utmost resistance it possibly can.

If we were entirely renewed in an instant, without any *previous* strivings of the spirit, then, indeed, there would be no room nor time for resistance ; but, otherwise, the heart will resist : If there were the least disposition in our hearts, contrary to our natural disposition to love ourselves supremely, live to ourselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, it might join in on God's side...be sincerely desirous that God would slay the enmity of our hearts ; but there is not : The carnal mind is wholly enmity against God—is not subject to his law, nor can be ; and so the whole heart will make resistance. If the disposition, to which we are recovered in conversion, were not so directly contrary to our natural disposition, as that our natural disposition must be slain, in order to the very being of that, the

sinner's opposition might not be so great ; but, when all that is within him is directly crossed and going to be killed, all that is within him will oppose and resist, till slain. We are, by nature, wholly *in the flesh* and *after the flesh :* According to a scripture-phrase, *that which is born of the flesh, is flesh ;* and, by conversion, we are to become *spirit....That which is born of the spirit, is spirit.* But the *flesh* and the *spirit* are, in scripture, represented as being *contrary the one to the other :* Will *flesh*, then, of its own accord, become *spirit?* No, surely : for the *flesh lusteth against the spirit ;* i. e. is wholly averse from it, and set against it : so that there is no other way but for the *flesh to be crucified*, with the affections and lusts : But the *flesh perfectly hates* this death, and therefore will *resist with all its might*....Rom. viii. 7, 8—John iii. 6—Gal. v. 17—Rom. vi. 6.

As the truth of this point is thus evident, from the reason and nature of things, so it is farther confirmed from constant experience : For, let any man read the *Bible* with attention, and he may plainly see that the very thing which God has always been aiming at, in all the external means he has used with his professing people, in every age of the world, has been *to recover them to a conformity to his holy law, in heart and life ;* i. e. to recover them from a disposition to love themselves supremely, live to themselves ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly, and a practice agreeable thereunto, to a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, and to love their neighbors as themselves, and to practise accordingly : *For on these two commands hang all the law and the prophets.* And we may also plainly see, that God's professing people have always manifested the greatest aversion to hearken to the *law* and to the *prophets*, and so to die to themselves, the world, and sin ; and thus to give up themselves to God, to love him, live to him, delight in him, and walk in all his ways. God sent all his servants, the *prophets*, to the children of Israel, rising early and sending ; but they always hated their words, and so stopped their ears, and refused to obey : yea, they fell into a rage at them, and, in

their rage, they mocked them....they scourged them....they bound them....they imprisoned them....they stoned them....they sawed them asunder, and made the rest wander about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented....*Heb.* xi. 35—38 : And when God sent his well-beloved Son to call a wicked world to return home unto him, they said, *Come, let us kill him*....Mat. xxi. 33—39. And when *Christ* sent his *apostles* to carry the glad tidings of pardon and peace to the ends of the earth, and call all men to repent and be converted—to return, and love, and serve the living God, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* conspired together against them, and killed them—just as the *ten tribes* killed the messenger whom Rehoboam sent unto them, to call and invite them to return to their former allegiance....I. *Kings* xii. 18. Therefore, says our blessed Savior to the Jews, who pretended great love to God and to the law, and mightily to honor their prophets, *You are like whited sepulchres ; you appear outwardly righteous, but inwardly are full of all hypocrisy and wickedness. Your fathers killed the prophets, whom you pretend to honor, but you are full as bad as they were. Ye serpents....ye generation of vipers*, &c. *Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes ; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye* WOULD NOT !...Mat. xxiii. 27—37. From all which, nothing can be plainer, than that this rebellious, God-hating world always have been set against a return to God, and been disposed to do all they could, to render all means ineffectual. Well might St. Stephen, therefore, say unto the Jews as he did, in Acts vii. 51....*Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the holy Ghost : as your fathers did, so do ye :* nor had they any reason to be angry with him therefor. And as all, who have enjoyed the external means of grace,

have thus been disposed to hate the light....shut their eyes.... stop their ears, and refuse to hear, and been utterly opposed to a return to God; so this is evidently the case with all whom God has inwardly wrought upon by his spirit—as all know, who have either had any experience themselves, or have candidly observed the experience of others: And, indeed, it must be so; for the very same temper which will make men resist the *outward*, will also dispose them to resist the *inward* means of grace. For the *holy spirit* teaches and urges the very same things that *Moses* and the *prophets*, and *Christ* and his *apostles* teach and urge, and pursues the same end; and will, therefore, of consequence, meet with the same opposition and resistance, from the very same quarter. *This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil....He that doth evil hateth the light*....John iii. 19, 20. That light which will discover men's evil deeds, and shew them their fallen, sinful, guilty, helpless, undone condition....and so spoil all their worldly, carnal comforts, the very idols of their hearts....and also kill their legal, self-righteous hopes, which is all the awakened and concerned sinner has, to his own sense and apprehension, to depend upon —that light which affects things, which are so directly cross to the inward temper of the sinner's heart, he will naturally be disposed to hate....shut his eyes against...flee from and resist with all his might; and that whether it comes from the *external* teachings of the word, or *internal* teachings of the spirit: Yea, so long as there is the least remainder of corruption left in believers themselves, it will hate to die, and struggle with all its might to keep its ground—yea, and to recover its former dominion: Rom. vii. 23....*I see another law in my members, warring against the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members:* Yea, it implies a contradiction to suppose corruption can in any case be willing to die; for every temper in our hearts *naturally* loves to be gratified and pleased, and it is a contradiction to suppose it can, at the same time, be willing to be crossed and killed....*Gal.* v. 17.

OBJ. *But do not awakened sinners earnestly desire to repent of and be humbled for their sins, and to mortify their corruptions, and to give up themselves to God, to love and live to him? And do they not earnestly pray for the divine spirit to assist them so to do? How can they then be disposed, at the same time, to make such mighty resistance.*

ANS. (1.) Awakened sinners see themselves in great danger, and they therefore earnestly desire and seek after self-preservation; and this is plainly owing to nature, and not to any grace or goodness in their hearts. Psalm lxvi. 3... *Through the greatness of thy power, thine enemies submit themselves unto thee;* i. e. they feign a submission, but they are thine enemies.—(2.) That which moves them to desire to repent, be humbled, &c. is, they hope by these means to make amends for their past sins, and ingratiate themselves into the favor of God....*Rom.* x. 3.; i. e. merely from self-love, with pure hypocrisy, they would impose upon God: For (3.) after all their pretences, desires, and prayers, their nature and temper is just what it used to be; and were they but delivered from the fears of hell, and left at full liberty to follow their own inclinations, they would live as vitiously as ever they did.—(4.) Yet they pretend to love God, and would fain have him believe them sincere, and are ready to expect acceptance for what they do, and to think it hard if God should not accept them. Now, if it was the work of the spirit of God, to build up such a sinner in this hypocritical, self-righteous way, he might be disposed, while under his fears and terrors, to concur and fall in with the spirit's influence; and all merely from self-love and for self-ends: But if the spirit of God goes about to bring home the law in its strictness, and shew such a sinner the very truth, that he does not love God, nor desire to....that his desires, and prayers, and tears, are all hypocritical.... that he is still dead in sin, and an enemy to God....that he deserves to be damned as much as ever he did....that God is at liberty, all his duties notwithstanding, to reject him....that he lies absolutely at God's mercy; now he will hate the light, shut his eyes against it, quarrel at it, and resist it with all his might.

It is exceedingly hard for the poor sinner, when he begins to be awakened, to part with a vain life, and vain companions....his carnal ease and comfort, and all vicious courses—to make restitution to those he has wronged in name or estate, and give himself to reading, meditation, and prayer, and to a serious, mortifying way of living : he cannot bear the thoughts—would fain contrive an easier way, or else delay, for the present, so mournful and tedious a work : But when, by the dreadful fears of hell and eternal damnation, he has been brought, after much reluctance and unwillingness, to a forced consent to all this, hoping thereby to appease the divine wrath and procure the divine favor—now, to have all his self-righteous hopes dashed and confounded, by a sight of the badness of his heart, by seeing he has no love to God....no sorrow for sin....no inclination to be holy, but averse to God and all that is good, and that all his forced goodness has no virtue in it....that he is yet under the whole guilt of all his sin....under condemnation of the law and the wrath of God....dead in sin....an enemy to God....absolutely at God's mercy ;—this, this, I say, is dreadful indeed, and far more cross to the very grain of the sinner's heart than all he ever met with before. Here, therefore, there will be the greatest struggle, and strongest resistance, before ever the sinner can, by the spirit of God, be brought clearly to see and give into these things ; for all these things are directly cross to the sinner's disposition to love himself supremely, and live to himself ultimately—directly cross to a spirit of self-supremacy and independence.—The sinner cannot bear that God should be so great and so sovereign, and himself so vile....so little...so absolutely at mercy : it is a *killing* thing. When the commandment came, sin revived, and I *died :* So that it is plain, that, notwithstanding all the awakened sinner's selfish desires and prayers, yet, in the habitual temper of his heart, he stands disposed to resist the influences of the divine spirit with all his might. He is so far from being willing to repent of his sins, that he is utterly unwillling to see and own his sinfulness—so far from desiring to be humbled, that he is by no means willing to see

the cause and reason he has to be humbled—so far from desiring to be made spiritually alive, that he will not so much as own that he is spiritually dead—so far from desiring the gracious influences of the holy spirit to reconcile him to God, that he will not own that he is an enemy to God...but would fain think that he heartily desires to love God, and stands ready to hate and resist that light, which would discover the enmity of his heart. *He that doth evil, hateth the light*, and flees from it, *lest his evil deeds be discovered;* and, for the same reason, he that hath an evil heart hates the light and resists it, lest the badness of his heart be discovered.

7. From all that has been said, we may learn that those *influences of the spirit*, which will be sufficient *effectually* to awaken, convince, and humble the sinner, and recover him to God, must be *irresistible* and *supernatural*. That the internal influences of the holy spirit are necessary to recover sinners to God, is so plainly held forth every where in the Bible, that the *Arminians* themselves do not deny it: But *how much*, and *what kind* of influences are needful, is very much disputed. Now *so much*, and *such sort* of influences are, beyond dispute, *needful*, as will be *sufficient effectually to answer the end*, and without which no sinner will ever be converted: This is self-evident. If sinners were so good-natured as to see, and feel, and own their sinfulness, and the justice of the sentence whereby they stand condemned, and die to themselves, the world and sin, and return home to God, through Jesus Christ....to love him, live to him, and delight in him forever, of their own accord, merely upon reading the Bible, and hearing the law and the gospel preached, then there would be no need of any inward influences of the spirit at all; or, if they were so good-natured as to be easily persuaded to do so, then some small degree of the inward influences of the spirit would do: But if, in the *first place*, they are altogether unwilling to see, and feel, and own their sin and guilt, and the justice of their condemnation according to law, and entirely disposed to hate and resist the light, as hath but just now been proved, then they must be brought

to it by an *all-conquering*, *irresistible* grace, or not at all: And if, in the *second place*, the clearest sight and greatest sense a natural man can have *of what God is*, instead of making him appear infinitely glorious and amiable in the eyes of one whose heart is dead in sin, and diametrically opposite to the divine nature, will rather irritate corruption, and make the native enmity of the heart ferment and rage, and become but the more apparent and sensible, as has been heretofore proved, then there must be a *supernatural*, *spiritual*, and *divine* change wrought in the heart, by the *immediate* influences of the spirit of God, whereby it shall become *natural* to look upon God as infinitely glorious and amiable in being what he is, and so a foundation hereby laid for us to love him with all our hearts, and so sincerely to repent, return, and give up ourselves to him, to live to him, and delight in him forever;—I say, if these things be so, there must be such a change wrought by the spirit of God, or not one sinner in the world will ever be converted to God: and, therefore, that there is an absolute necessity of such influences of the spirit of God, in order to a saving conversion, is evident, to a demonstration, from the very reason and nature of things. God himself must *take away the heart of stone*, and *give an heart of flesh*, and *write his law on our hearts....raise us from the dead....create us anew....open our eyes*, &c. &c. according to the language of scripture: And these things God does do for all that are renewed, and therefore they are said *to be born of God....to be born of the spirit....to be spiritual....to be made partakers of the divine nature*, &c. and God is said to give *faith*, *repentance*, and every divine grace...*Ezek.* xxxvi. 26—*Heb.* viii. 10—*Eph.* ii. 1—10—I. *Cor.* iv. 6—*John* i. 13, and iii. 6—*Rom.* viii. 6, 9—II. *Pet.* i. 4—*Acts* v. 31—*James* i. 17.

8. From what has been said, we may learn *to understand the doctrine of divine sovereignty in the bestowment of special grace for the regeneration and conversion of sinners.* The scripture represents God as *choosing some before the foundation of the world, to be holy and to be his children*....Eph. i. 4, 5—and teaches us that *whom he did predestinate, them he also calls....and whom*

he calls, them he also justifies...and whom he justifies, them he also glorifies....Rom. viii. 30—and plainly intimates that *such as are given to Christ, and ordained to eternal life, believe, and none other*....John vi. 37, 39—Acts xiii. 48—Rom. xi. 7 : And the scriptures teach us that *God has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion*....Rom. ix. 18—and that, *for the most part, he passes by the rich, and great, and honorable, and chooses the meanest and most ignoble, that no flesh might glory in his presence*....I. Cor. i. 26—29 : *He hides the gospel from the wise and prudent, and reveals it to babes ; and that because it pleases him so to do, and Christ rejoices in his sovereign pleasure herein*, as displaying his infinite wisdom....*Mat.* xi. 25, 26.

And now what has been said may show us the infinite reasonableness of such a procedure : For God, whose eyes run to and fro through all the earth, seeing all things as being what they are, plainly beholds and views the state and temper of this apostate world ; and let men pretend what they will, he knows their hearts—he knows they do not love him, nor care for him—he sees all their hypocrisy, and their inward contrariety to him and his law, and how much they are settled in their temper....so far from repentance, that they will not so much as see their sin, but stand to justify themselves, insensible of their guilt, and insensible of their desert, hating the light : He sees they hate to perceive their sin, and guilt, and desert, and to be humbled, and lie down at his foot, and be absolutely beholden to him ; and that they would make the utmost resistance if he should take them in hand, and go about thoroughly to convince them, by his spirit, how things really are : Thus he views his apostate, rebellious creatures, and sees how sinful....how dead in sin....how contrary to all good, and how irreclaimable they are, and, upon the whole, how much they deserve eternal damnation. In the days of eternity, he saw just how things would be, beforehand ; and now, in time, he sees just how things actually are : In the days of eternity, therefore, he saw that there would not be any thing in them to move him to have mercy on

any; and now, in time, he finds it to be the case: and yet he was pleased, *then*, of his mere sovereign pleasure, to determine not to cast off all, but to save some—so, *now*, he is pleased to put his sovereign pleasure in execution; and he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion, and many times takes the meanest and vilest, that the sovereignty of his grace might be the more illustrious, and the pride of all flesh might be brought low, and the Lord alone be exalted: And surely such a conduct infinitely well becomes the supreme Governor of the whole world.

Indeed, if any of Adam's race were so well disposed, as, of their own accord, merely upon reading the Bible, hearing the gospel preached, and enjoying the common means of grace, to believe and repent, and to return home to God through Jesus Christ, they might be accepted, pardoned, and saved; nor would there be any room for, or need of sovereign grace: But God, who knows the hearts of all, sees that all the pretences of sinners, that way, are but mere hypocrisy, and that, at heart, they are his enemies, and utterly opposed to a return. Or if there was any virtue to be found among any of the fallen race of Adam, antecedent to God's grace, this might move him to have mercy upon one, rather than another: But he sees that all are entirely destitute of love to him, and entirely at enmity against him, wholly void of real goodness, and dead in sin, and that the only reason why some are not so outwardly extravagant and vicious as others, is, because he has, by one means and another, restrained them, and not because they are really better. And while God thus beholds all alike dead in sin, and, in the temper of their hearts, by nature, equally averse to a return to him, and views all as guilty and hell-deserving, there is nothing....there can be nothing, to move him to determine to show mercy to one, rather than another, but his own good pleasure; and therefore he has mercy on whom he will have mercy: he awakens, convinces, humbles, converts whom he pleases, and leaves the rest to follow their own inclinations, and take their own course, *enduring, with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath.*

Let it be here noted, that many of those warm disputes about the doctrine of divine sovereignty, which have filled the christian world, turn very much upon *this point*. All are agreed, that whosoever believes, repents, and returns to God, through Jesus Christ, shall be saved: All will, therefore, yield that if mankind, in general, were so well disposed as to return to God, through Jesus Christ, of their own accord, upon the calls and invitations of the gospel, and only by the influence and help of those advantages which are common, then all might be saved; nor would there be any need of, or room for, this sovereign, distinguishing grace: But if mankind have none of this disposition, but are every way diametrically opposite thereto—if all the calls of the gospel, and common means and methods of grace will have no effectual influence upon them—if nothing but an almighty, all-conquering grace can stop them in their course of rebellion, subdue their lusts, and recover them to God;—if this be the case of all mankind, then it is plain that nothing but the mere mercy of God can interpose and prevent an universal ruin: And it is plain that the sovereign Governor of the whole world is, in the nature of things, at most perfect liberty to shew this mercy to none, or to some few, or to all, just as it seems good in his sight: And since, from eternity, he foresaw just how things would be, from eternity he might determine what to do: So that the great question is, Whether mankind are naturally so entirely averse to a true conversion? For if they are, the reasonableness of the divine sovereignty must be admitted in this case; and if they are not, none will any longer plead for it: And what the natural opposition of mankind to conversion is, may be easily seen, if we consider what the true nature of conversion is, and compare their temper herewith: And what the true nature of conversion is, may be easily known by considering the true nature of the moral law:—In a word, if the law does only require what the *Arminians* and *Pelagians* suppose, and religion be just such a thing, it is a plain case that mankind are not so bad, nor do they need such an irresistible grace: But if the law requires quite another sort of holiness,

and so true religion be quite another sort of thing, even such as I have described, which lies so diametrically opposite to the natural bent and bias of our whole souls, it is a clear case that grace must be irresistible, and can proceed from nothing but mere free mercy, nor result from any thing but the sovereign pleasure of the most High : So that, in short, the whole dispute is resolved into this question—What does the law of God require, and wherein does a genuine conformity thereto consist ? But of this more afterwards.

And from what has been said, we may easily gather a plain and short answer to all the mighty cry about *promises*, *promises to the unconverted, if they will do as well as they can ;* for it is plain, heaven's gates stand wide open to all that believe and repent, and return to God, through Jesus Christ....*John* iii. 16 : and it is plain, the wrath of God is revealed against all who do not do this...*John* iii. 36 : and it is plain that there is nothing but the want of a good temper, together with the obstinate perverseness of sinners, that hinders their return to God ; and that, therefore, all their pretences of being willing to do as well as they can, are mere hypocrisy. They are so unwilling to return to God, or take one step that way, that they can be brought back by nothing short of an almighty power ; and are so far, therefore, from being entitled to the promises of the gospel, that they are actually, and that deservedly too, under condemnation by the gospel, (*John* iii. 18) and under all the curses of the law...*Gal.* iii. 10. " Take heed, therefore, O sinner, thou enemy of God, " when you pretend that you desire to repent and do as well as " you can, that you be not found quieting yourself in a state of " estrangement from God, hiding your natural aversion to God " and holiness under fair pretences : And know it, if you do, " though you may deceive yourself by the means, yet it will ap- " pear, another day, before all worlds, and it will be known that " you were an enemy to God, and *would not* be reconciled, and " did but flatter him with your lips, and lie unto him with your " tongue, in all your seemingly devout pretences. You think " yourself good enough to have an interest in the promises, but

" infinite goodness judges you deserve to be numbered among " the children of wrath and heirs of hell.....*John* iii. 18, 36.— " Your high conceit of your own goodness is the foundation of " all your confidence, and both join to keep you secure in sin " and under guilt, and insensible of your need of Christ and " sovereign grace....*Luke* v. 31—*Rom.* x. 3." Did sinners but see the badness of their hearts, they would be soon convinced that the promises are not theirs, but the threatenings; and would feel and know that they have no claims to make, but lie absolutely at mercy....*Luke* xviii. 13.

9. And if it is nothing but the mere grace and sovereign good pleasure of God, which moves him to stop sinners in their career to hell, and by his irresistible and all-conquering grace, and by the supernatural influences of his holy spirit, subdue their stubbornness, take down the power of sin in their hearts, and recover them to himself: and if he does this for them, when they are at enmity against him, and are his open enemies by wicked works, and so are altogether deserving his wrath and vengeance;—I say, if this be the case, there is all reason to think, *that he, who thus begins, will carry on the work to perfection.* He knew how bad the sinner was when he first took him in hand....how he hated to be converted, and how he would resist, and that his own almighty arm must bring salvation; and yet this did not discourage his first undertaking: And he knew how the sinner would prove after conversion.... just how barren and unfruitful....just how perverse and rebellious, and just how apt to forget God and turn away from him, and that his own almighty grace must always be working in him to will and to do....*Phil.* ii. 13. He knew all the discouraging circumstances before-hand, and his infinite goodness surmounted them all—and he had mercy on the poor sinner, because he would have mercy on him, of his mere good pleasure, from his boundless grace, aiming at the glory of his own great name ....*Eph.* i. 6. And now, this being the case, we have all reason to think that God will never alter his hand, or leave unfinished the work which he has begun; for there always will be the same

motive from which he undertook the work, to excite him to carry it on—even the infinite goodness of his nature; and he will be always under the same advantages to answer the end he at first proposed, namely, the advancement of the glory of his grace: And he will never meet with any unforeseen difficulties or discouragements in his way. We may, therefore, be pretty certain, if really God begins this work, under such views and such circumstances, that it is with design to carry it on;—as *Samuel* reasons in a parallel case:—I. Sam. xii. 22....*For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake; because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people:* So that if the doctrine of the *saints' perseverance* were not expressly taught in scripture, yet, on this ground, we might argue very strongly for it: But that this is a doctrine plainly revealed in the gospel, we may learn from *Mat.* xiii. 23—*John* iv. 14, and x. 4, 5, 27, 28—I. *John* iii. 6, 9—*Heb.* viii. 10, &c. &c. When St. Paul kept under his body, and brought it into subjection, LEST *he should be a cast-away*, (I. Cor. ix. 27.) he did no otherwise than he was wont to do in temporal concerns, in cases wherein he was, beforehand, *certain of the event*: So he sent word to the *chief Captain*, of the *Jews* lying in wait to kill him, *lest he should be murdered by them;* although it was revealed to him from God, but the very night before, that he should live to see Rome..... *Acts* xxiii. 12—21: So he would not allow the *sailors* to leave the ship in the midst of the storm, *lest they should some of them be drowned* for want of their help; although, but a little before, it was revealed to him from God that not one of them should be drowned....*Acts* xxvii. 23—31. And, indeed, it was his duty to do as he did, as much as if he had been at the greatest uncertainties about the event: So, although Paul knew that never *any thing should separate him from the love of God*, (Rom. viii. 38.)—yet he used all possible endeavors to mortify his corruptions, *lest he should be a cast-away:* And, indeed, it was his duty to do so, as much as if he had been at the greatest uncertainties about the event: And what was his duty, was also the duty of all good men; and therefore St. Paul, in his *epistles*, is

frequently exhorting all to do as he did ; and that in a perfect consistency with the doctrine of the *saints' perseverance*, which he also teaches : And as Paul's being *certain of the event* did not tend to make him careless in the use of proper means to save his natural life, but rather tended to encourage and animate him, as knowing that he should finally succeed—so his being *certain of the event* did not tend to make him careless, but to animate him, with respect to his spiritual and eternal life : And as it was with him, so it is with all good men....*Rom.* vi. 2 : For this is always the case, that certainty of success animates men, if the thing they are about be what they love, and what their hearts are engaged in ; but to die to themselves, the world and sin, and love God, and live to him, and grow up into perfect holiness, is what all believers love, and have their hearts engaged after ; an absolute certainty, therefore, of perseverance has, in the nature of things, the greatest tendency to animate them to the most sprightly activity. There are none but graceless hypocrites that take encouragement from the doctrines of free grace to carelessness and sin....*Rom.* vi. 1, 2.

10. If this be the nature of a saving conversion—if this be the nature of true holiness—if this be true religion, so *contrary* to flesh and blood, and all the habitual propensities of nature, *then, so long as there is the least corruption left in the heart, there will, of necessity, be a continual conflict :* Grace will continually seek the ruin of sin, through its contrariety to it, and hatred of it ; and sin will strive to maintain its ground—yea, and to regain its former dominion. The gracious nature delights in the law of God, and aspires after sinless perfection—the sinful nature hates the law of God, and strives to lead the man captive into sin : The gracious nature is a disposition to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively ; and this sinful nature is a disposition to love self supremely, live to self ultimately, and delight in that which is not God wholly : and because these two *are contrary the one to the other*, therefore *the flesh will lust against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh*....Gal. v. 17. The gracious nature joins in on

God's side against all sin; and while God *works in the man to will and to do, he works out his own salvation with fear and trembling*....with caution and circumspection....with watchfulness and holy concern—laboring to die to himself, the world and sin, and be wholly the Lord's....*Phil.* ii. 12, 13. While the divine spirit is breathing upon his heart, and realising to him the being and perfections of God....the existence and importance of divine and eternal things, and is spreading divine light over his soul, and is banishing selfish and worldly views, and is drawing his soul to holy and divine contemplations, he feels the divine influence....he blesses the Lord....he summons all within him to engagedness....he pants after God:—"O that I might know "him—that I might see him in his infinite glory! (Psalm lxiii. "1, 2.)....*O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee—my* "*soul thirsteth for thee—my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and* "*thirsty land, where no water is....To see thy power and glory,* "*so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.* (Verse 8.).....*My* "*soul followeth hard after thee.* (Psalm lxxiii. 25.)....*Whom* "*have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth I de-*"*sire besides thee.* O that I could, with my whole heart, love "thee forever, live to thee forever, live upon thee forever, and "never, never, depart from thee! O that I could think for thee, "and speak for thee, and act for thee—at home and abroad, "by day and by night, always live to thee, and upon thee!— "Here, Lord, I give myself to thee, to be forever thine....to love "thee and to fear thee, and to walk in all thy ways, and to keep "all thy commands; and O that my heart might never depart "from thee! But alas, alas, *to will is present with me*....to have "a disposition to all this, and long for all this, and seek and "strive for all this, is easy and natural, *for I delight in the law* "*of God after the inward man; but how to perform I find not*— "how to get my whole heart so to fall in, as that there shall not "be the least contrary temper, this is quite beyond me, *for I* "*am still carnal, sold under sin....have another law in my mem-*"*bers*....have still the remains *(of the flesh)* of my native con-"trariety to God, and disposition to disrelish divine things;

"and so am apt to forget God....to warp off from him, and to "have selfish and worldly views and designs secretly creep in- "to my mind, and steal away my heart from God—and so am "daily *led into captivity*. O that sin was entirely dead—that a "disposition to disrelish God....to forget him....to go away "from him....to live without him, and to seek content in that "which is not God, was entirely slain! *O, wretched man that "I am, who shall deliver me?*"....Rom. vii. 14—24.

If grace and corruption were not so contrary the one to the other....so diametrically opposite, there might possibly be an accommodation between them, and both quietly dwell together in the same heart; but now they are set for each other's ruin, and seek each other's destruction—and, like fire and water, will never rest till one or the other be entirely destroyed....*Gal.* v. 17.

If grace could be wholly killed, or corruption wholly slain, then the conflict of believers might wholly cease in this life; but grace is immortal, like a *living spring* that shall never dry, (*John* iv. 14.)—like a *root* that will ever grow, (*Mat.* xiii. 20—23.) and Christ is always *purging* believers, that they may *bring forth more fruit*, (*John* xv. 2.): So that *he that is born of God cannot sin as others do*, (I. *John* iii. 9.)—cannot sin, but against the grain of his heart, the gracious nature continually resisting, (*Gal.* v. 17.); so that it is certain, from the nature of things, that David and Solomon neither of them felt, in their worst frames, as graceless men do. Grace resisted within, (*Gal.* v. 17.) hating their proceedings; nor did it cease inwardly to struggle and torment them, till the one cries out, *My bones wax old through my roaring all the day long*....Psalm lii. 3: For *his sin was ever before his eyes*....Psalm xxxi. 3: And the other, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity and vexation of spirit*...Eccle. i. 2.

Many *stony-ground hearers*, who were once filled with light and joy, do, when their religion is all worn out, and they lie dead, and blind, and stupid, whole months and years together, cry, *the best are dead sometimes;* and have recourse to David and Solomon: and many a hypocrite, whose religion is only by fits and pangs, sometimes floated as the streets in summer,

by a sudden shower, and then, in a few days, as dry as ever, deceive themselves here ; and many take natural conscience to be a principle of grace, and the war between that and their corruptions to be a gracious conflict : But as all counterfeit religions are specifically different from the true, as has been already shown, so, by consequence, their conflict is different from that which believers have, in its very nature. They fight, from different principles, and for different ends, and about different things, and in a different manner, just as their religions differ from one another.

11. If this be the nature of conversion and holiness, and the manner wherein they are wrought—and if true religion be thus specifically different from all counterfeits, *then may believers be infallibly certain that they have true grace.* A man cannot but perceive his own thoughts, and know what views he has, and be intuitively acquainted with his own designs and aims ; so every man knows it is with him, as to the things of this world. Much less is it possible that there should be *so great a change* in a man's heart and life, thoughts, affections, and actions, as there is made by conversion, and yet he know nothing about it. For a man to be awakened, out of a state of security in sin, to see what a sinful, guilty, helpless, lost, undone state he is in, and yet not to perceive any thing of it, evidently implies a contradiction, and so is, in the nature of things, impossible : For a man to be brought to see God in his infinite glory, so as to be disposed to love him supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively, and yet not to perceive it, i. e. not to be conscious of his views and affections, also implies a contradiction, and so is impossible : For a man to lose his selfish and worldly views more and more, from year to year, and die to himself, the world and sin—and for a man to live a life of communion with God, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, and yet not at all to perceive it, is utterly impossible ; for the mind of man is naturally conscious to its own actings : So, from the nature of things, it is evident that grace is perceptible ; yea, in its own nature, it must be as perceptible as corrup-

tion....love to God as love to the world....sorrow for sin as sorrow for affliction....aiming at God's glory as aiming at our own honor and interest: But if true grace be, in its own nature, perceptible, and if it be also specifically different from all counterfeits, it is self-evident that a good man may know that he has true grace. I cannot see why, extraordinary cases excepted, a good man, who lives a life of communion with and devotedness to God, and in the daily exercise of every grace, may not come to know that he has grace. Surely he must be conscious to the actings of his own mind; for this is natural: And surely he may see the difference between his religion and all counterfeits, when the difference is so great and plain: so that, if the scriptures did not expressly teach us that assurance is attainable, it is yet evidently demonstrable from the nature of things.

But the scriptures do plainly teach this doctrine, in II. *Pet.* i. 10—I. *John* v. 13—I. *John* ii. 3, and iii. 14, &c. &c.—Besides, all those promises, that are made for the comfort and support of God's people in this world, suppose that they may know that they are the people of God: for, unless a man knows that he is a child of God, he cannot rationally take comfort in those promises which are peculiar to such. It is true, brazen hypocrites will do so, but they act very presumptuously. It is folly and madness for me to flatter myself that God has promised to do so and so for me, unless I know that I am one to whom the promises belong: For instance, it is folly and madness for me to *believe* that God will make *all things work together for my good*, according to that promise in *Rom.* viii. 28, unless I know that *I love God;* for this promise plainly respects such, and no other: But there are very many precious promises made to believers in the word of God, which are evidently designed for their comfort and support. It is certain, therefore, that God thinks that believers may *know* they are such—without which knowledge, all these promises cannot attain their end.

Besides, to suppose that to be a servant of God, and a servant of the devil....to be going the way to heaven, and the way to hell....to be travelling in the narrow way, and to be travelling

in the broad way, are so near alike, as that even good men themselves cannot possibly know them asunder, and which way they are going, is, on every account, intolerably absurd ; nor could the christian world have possibly drunk in such a notion but that true grace is so very rare a thing.

I may here, by the way, just observe these three things :—1. *That the way for a man to know that he has grace, is not to try himself by fallible signs, but intuitively to look into himself and see grace.* A thousand signs of grace will not prove that a man has grace. There is no sign of grace to be depended upon, but grace itself ; for every thing but grace a hypocrite may have : And what grace, holiness, or true religion is, I have already endeavored to show.—2. *That the way for a man to know that he has grace, is not to judge himself by the degree and measure of his religious frames and affections, or the height of his attainments ; but by the special nature of them :* for as there is not any one grace but a hypocrite may have its counterfeit, so hypocrites may rise as high in *their* religion as any true believer does in *his.* Was Elijah, the prophet, jealous for the name and worship of the true God, and against false religion?...So was Jehu : and he appeared as full of zeal, and more courageous, and did greater exploits. There was scarcely a more zealous saint than Elijah, in *Old-Testament* times ; but yet Jehu, that hypocrite, made a much greater show and noise—seemed to be fuller of zeal and courage, and actually did greater exploits, setting aside the miracles which God wrought by Elijah, (I. *Kings* xviii. and xix. chap.—II. *Kings* ix. and x. chap.) And we do not read of one saint in all the *Bible* that fasted in a constant way, twice every week, as the Pharisee did, (*Luke* xviii.) And there is not one saint in all the *Bible* that ever did, externally and visibly, any higher acts of self-denial, than to give *all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burnt ;* and yet St. Paul intimates that a man may do this, and still have no grace in his heart....I. *Cor.* xiii. 3 : It is no certain evidence, therefore, that a man is a good man, because he has a *great deal* of religion—more than the most, and full as much as the best—yea, more than any in all

the country....yea, or in all the whole world; for, in Jehu's time, there was not perhaps, for a while, one like him upon the face of the earth: A man, therefore, cannot know that he is a good man, by the *degree* of his religion, but only from the *special nature* of it: And wherein true religion *specifically* differs from all counterfeits, I have already shown.—3. Since grace is, in its own nature, *perceptible*, and *specifically different* from all counterfeits, *there is no need of the immediate witness of the spirit, in order to a full assurance.* If the spirit of God does but give us a good degree of grace, and enlighten our minds to understand the scriptures, and so to know the nature of true grace, we may then perceive that we have grace; and the more grace we have, the more perceptible will it be, and its difference from all counterfeits will be the more plain: And if a believer may know and be certain that he has grace, without the immediate witness of the spirit, then such a witness is altogether needless, and would be of no advantage: but God never grants his spirit to believers, to do things needless and to no advantage; and therefore there is no such thing as the immediate witness of the spirit in this affair: And besides, it is plain the scriptures *every where* direct us to look into ourselves, to see whether we love God and keep his commands—to see whether Christ, in his holy nature, be formed in us—to see whether the spirit, as an enlightener and sanctifier, dwells in us, and influences and governs us; but never *once* directs us to look for the *immediate* witness of the spirit, in order to know whether we have grace.

Obj. *But the text says expressly*, The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God....*Rom.* viii. 16.

Ans. But the text does not in the least intimate that the spirit witnesses *immediately*. The spirit *bears witness*; but how? The spirit *makes it evident* that we are the children of God; but in what way? *By immediate revelation?* No; the scripture no where tells us to look for such revelations, or lays down any marks whereby we may know which come from God, and which from the devil. How then does the spirit make it *evi-*

dent that we are the children of God, and by what *witness* does he make it appear?...Not by *telling* us that we are children—the devil may *tell* hypocrites so; but by *making us children in the very temper of our hearts*....by giving to us *much* of a *child-like* frame of spirit towards God—a thing the devil cannot do, and so a thing by which we may certainly know. This holy, divine, child-like frame and temper of heart, whereby we bear the very image of our heavenly father, is God's *mark*, which, more or less conspicuously, he sets upon all the *lambs* of his flock. This is the *seal of the spirit*, (Eph. i. 13.): For this is the *earnest of our inheritance*, (verse 14.): It is *eternal life begun* in the soul, (*John* xvii. 3.) This is called the *witness of the spirit*, because it is *what the spirit works* in our hearts, and that by which he *makes it evident* that we are the children of God—the *design* of *witnesses* being to *make* things *evident*: And, indeed, this is the *only distinguishing mark* that God puts upon his children, and the *only thing* wherein they differ from all hypocrites—and is the *only evidence* the scripture directs them to look for and expect, and without which all other evidences are just good for nothing....*Mat.* vii. 24—27—*John* xv. 2—I. *John* ii. 3, 4, and iii. 6—10.

And this being the case, we may see how much out of the way those are, who think and say *that it is a sin for them to doubt the goodness of their state, because of their badness, and because they can see no grace in their hearts*: "For," say they, "that "would be to call God's truth and faithfulness into question.... "who has, by his spirit, immediately assured me of his love and "my salvation—just as if the immutability of his purpose de-"pended upon my good frames: No; I must do as Abraham "did, *who, against hope, believed in hope*; so, though I see no "grace in my heart, or signs of any, yet I must believe my state "is good, and that I shall be saved. It is not my duty to look "so much into my own heart—I shall never be the better for "that; but I must look to Christ, and believe, and never doubt: "for the spirit of God did, *at such a time*, assure me of Christ's "love to me...and I knew I was not deceived...and it would now

"be a great sin in me to doubt—it would be giving the lie to "Christ and to the holy spirit."

How sad a delusion are such poor sinners under, who dare not believe the holy scriptures, for fear they shall sin, which every where assure us, that unless we are holy in heart and life, our faith is vain, and we in a state of condemnation; and teach us that we ought to be no more confident of our good state, than in proportion as our sanctification is evident! How sad it is that they should attribute all their doubts to *carnal reason* or the *devil*, which, indeed, are but the secret dictates of their own consciences, and are so agreeable to the word of God! What a *dreadful spirit* is this that thus leads them off from the word of God, and so blinds their minds that they cannot understand it, nor dare believe it! Surely it can be no other than *Satan transformed into an angel of light.* *

* OBJ. *But the scripture forbids doubting.* *Mat.* xiv. 31....O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

ANS. In that text, Christ does not blame Peter for doubting his state, but for doubting he should be drowned.

OBJ. *But Christ upbraided them with their unbelief*....Mark xvi. 14.

ANS. He did not blame them for not believing they were in a good state, but for not believing that he was risen from the dead.

OBJ. *But Abraham is commended, in that* against hope he believed in hope....*Rom.* iv. 18.

ANS. But the thing to be believed, and hoped for, was, that he should have a son, which he had good grounds to expect: So this is nothing to the purpose.

OBJ. *But St. Paul says*, we walk by faith, and not by sight....II. *Cor.* v. 7.

ANS. That is, in all their conduct, they were governed by a realizing belief of unseen things, and not by things seen and temporal....II. *Cor.* iv. 18. It was not Paul's way to lie dead whole months and years together, nor was he ever driven to such a strait, as to be forced to believe himself to be in a good state, without sufficient evidence.

OBJ. *But*, what is not of faith, is sin....*Rom.* xiv. 23. *But doubts arise from unbelief.*

ANS. 1. If any man does not believe that it is lawful for him to do some particular act, and yet ventures to do it, he sins—he acts against his own conscience: This is the plain sense of the text, and so this text is nothing to the purpose.

2. An hypocrite's doubts are wont to arise from unbelief, i. e. from his not stedfastly believing the immediate revelations which he had from the devil, *that his sins are pardoned.* The devil tries to keep him quiet, but sometimes his conscience is a little awakened, and then he fears and doubts he is deluded; and now the devil tries to make him believe that it is a sin to doubt. The devil would fain make him believe all is well, i. e. believe at a venture, without a thorough search and trial, and without sufficient evidence. 3. It is

Alas! alas! How does the God of this world blind the minds of them that believe not! Some firmly believe that there is no such thing as a good man's knowing that he has grace; and so they contentedly live along, not knowing what world they are hastening unto....to heaven or to hell; but they *hope* their state is good, and *hope* their *hope* is well grounded, but *know* not but that their *hope* is that of the hypocrite: Yea, they are not willing to believe there is any such thing as *knowing*, for that would make them suspect that they are wrong, and that true religion is something they never had; which, if it be the case, yet they are not willing to know it. They hide themselves in the dark! They say, There is no light! And will not believe that a good man may *know that he has passed from death to life*: While *others*, from the very same principle, viz. *because they hate the light*, firmly believe that it is *a sin to doubt;* and so will never, dare never, call their state into question, and thoroughly look through the matter: both are equally rotten at heart, and so equally hate the light, although they take different methods to keep from it; and the devil does his utmost to keep both fast bound where they are.

3. It is a sin for a true believer to live so as not to have his evidences clear; but it is no sin for him to be so honest and impartial, as to doubt, when, in fact, his evidences are not clear: It is a sin to darken his evidences; but it is no sin to see that they are darkened: It is a sin for a man, by rioting and drunkenness, to make himself sick; but it is no sin to feel that he is sick; or, if there be grounds for it, to doubt he shall die. We may bring calamities upon ourselves by our sins, both outward and inward, and our calamities may arise from our sins; and yet our calamities have not the nature of *sins*, but are rather of the nature of *punishments*. It is sin, in believers, which lays the foundation for doubts: it is sin which is the occasion of their doubts; but their doubts are not sins any the more for this. Some seem to suppose that every thing which is occasioned by sin, is sin; but there is no truth in their supposition. It is not a sin for unconverted people to think themselves to be unconverted; and yet that thought of themselves is occasioned by sin—for their being unconverted is their sin.

Obj. *But believers are exhorted* to hold fast their confidence....*Heb.* iii. 6. *And it is said*, verse 14....For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.

Ans. That is, their confidence that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, together with a true faith in him, as is manifest from the whole context. Nor is any thing more absurd than to say, that men shall *be made partakers of Christ*, if they hold fast their *confidence* of *their good state*, which is what many a hypocrite does, and that to the very last....*Mat.* vii. 22—*Luke* xiii. 25, 26, 27.

Happy the true believer, who is made impartial by divine grace! It is a recovery to God and holiness that he is after: a confidence that his sins are pardoned, without *this*, would be but a poor thing. If he obtains *this*, he gets what he wants; and if not, he feels himself undone: nor can he flatter himself that he has obtained it, when he has not: And *this* he makes his only evidence of God's eternal love, and of his title to eternal glory; and believes his state to be good, no farther than this goes....*Mat.* vii. 21—27.

Thus I have gone through the *first use*, the use of *instruction*: and thus we see how a right understanding of the *law* will set many of the important doctrines of religion in a clear and easy—in a scriptural and rational light. By the *law* we may learn the primitive state of man, and how low we are fallen, and to what we must be recovered—and so, by consequence, how averse we are to a recovery....what grace we need to recover us—and so, by consequence, that we must be saved by sovereign grace, or not at all: whence the reasonableness of the saints' perseverance appears; and, from the whole, the nature of the christian conflict and the attainableness of assurance are discovered.—And I will conclude this *use* with two *remarks*:

Remark 1. If the law requires what, I think, I have proved it does, and a conformity to it consists in what I have before described, then all the other particulars do necessarily and most inevitably follow: Such was the image of God in which Adam was created, and such is our natural depravity, and such are the best duties of the unregenerate, and such is the nature of conversion, and our aversion to it, &c.; so that, if my first principles are true, then the whole scheme is, beyond dispute, true also.—And what are my first principles?....Why, that to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves, is originally the very essence of religion; and that the grounds upon which God requires us so to do, are to be the motives of our obedience. He requires us to love him supremely, &c. because he is supremely glorious and amiable, and because our additional obligations to him are what they are: He requires us to love our

neighbors as ourselves, because they are what they are, and stand in such relations to us. With a perfect moral rectitude of temper, influenced and governed by truth—by the reason and fitness of things, he would have us love and glorify him as GOD, i. e. as being what he is ; and love and treat our neighbors as being what they are : And is not this *evidently* the meaning of the divine law ?

REMARK 2. If the law, as a rule of life, be so abated and altered, as that now it *only* requires us, merely from a principle of self-love and for self-ends, sincerely to endeavor to love God and keep his commands, and aim at his glory—and if the law, as a covenant, be disannulled, and such an obedience be substituted in the room of perfection, as a condition of eternal life, or as a condition of our interest in Christ, then the contrary to all that I have laid down is most true and certain : For let the primitive state of man be what it would, it is plain we are not entirely destitute of a conformity to this *new law*, much less diametrically opposite to it in the natural temper of our minds....nor are our best duties, while unregenerate, sin ; it is plain, conversion is another and a much easier thing, and that we are not so entirely averse to it, and do not need irresistible grace, nor lie at God's sovereign mercy, &c. All these things, and many more such-like, are plain, if the *good old law* is thus altered and abated, and thus disannulled—if the *new law* requires no more, and this be the condition of eternal life, or of an interest in Christ : So that, if any are disposed to disbelieve what have been laid down as consequences, and to build upon another fabric—if they will be consistent with themselves, they can lay no other foundation than this, viz. *To destroy the law ;* which I have before proved to be as impossible as to destroy the nature of God ; because the moral law necessarily results from the divine perfections, and our obligations to conform to it are infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, as the nature and perfections of God himself.

And, therefore, I think, we may conclude, with the greatest certainty, that this foundation, viz. that the law is thus abated

and altered, is but sand; and that the fabric built upon it will not stand. If the law had required us to love ourselves supremely, and live to ourselves ultimately, and to have endeavored to love God and our neighbors only to answer our own ends—then this sort of religion would have been right.—Did I say *right?* No; it would not be right, being unalterably contrary to the very reason and nature of things; nor could such a law have been possibly made by a God, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity: But if this was *right*—if this was religion, it is plain mankind have *the root of the matter* in them; for they are all naturally inclined to love themselves supremely, and live to themselves ultimately; and so would not need *to be born again*, to have *a new nature*—the *old nature* would be sufficient; they would only need to be convinced that it is for their interest to endeavor to love God and do their duty, and merely self-love would make them religious, in order to answer their own ends: But if the law never has been thus abated and altered, then this religion is really no religion at all—nothing but mere hypocrisy, and of a nature diametrically opposite to true holiness. Only let it be clearly determined *what the nature of the moral law is*, and there will be a final end put to a hundred controversies.

Here is a man, he reforms his life a little, and joins with the church—he prays in his family, and sometimes in his closet—and, for the most part, it may be, he is honest in his dealings, and civil and sober in his behavior; and this is his conversion ....this is his religion: And now he pleads that conversion is a gradual thing, because his was such—and that a man cannot know when he was converted, because that is the case with him—that there is no need of irresistible grace, because he knows that it is a pretty easy thing to convert as he has done—and he hates the doctrine of divine sovereignty, because he never felt any need of a sovereign grace to save him—and he holds falling from grace, because his religion is as easily lost as gotten: But does he know that he has any grace, after all? No, no, that is a thing (says he) none can know: He believes the holy spirit assists him; but he is not sensible of his influences, or of any

help from him, any more than if he had none: He believes he loves God, and is a true saint at heart; but he does not feel any more love to God, or grace in his heart, than if there was none there—and the reason is, because there is none: But being secure in sin, and it being for his wordly interest to make a profession of religion, he now sets up for a good man: *For without the law sin is dead*, and so he is *alive without the law*..... Rom. vii. 8, 9. And now those doctrines and that preaching which are calculated to detect his hypocrisy, and awaken him out of his security, he hates and cries out against: And if any seem to experience any thing further in religion than he has, for that very reason he condemns it all for delusion: But he pretends mightily to plead up for morality and good works, though, in truth, he is an enemy to all real holiness. This is the course of many; but some are more sincere, and strict, and conscientious in their way.

But let men be ever so sincere, strict, and conscientious in their religion, if all results merely from self-love, the slavish fears of hell, and mercenary hopes of heaven, there is not, in all their religion, the least real, genuine conformity to the moral law;—it is all but an hypocritical, feigned show of love and obedience;—it is not the thing which the law requires, but something of a quite different nature; unless we lay aside God's old and everlasting law, and invent a new, abated, altered law, which shall declare that to be right, which, in the nature of things, is unalterably wrong; and by such a law, such a religion will pass for genuine: But it is sad, when we are driven to invent a *new law*, to vindicate our religion and our hopes of heaven, since, at the day of judgment, we shall find the *old law* to be in full force.

I am sensible that *old objection* will be always rising—"But "it is not just that God should require of us more than we can "do, and then threaten to damn us for not doing of it:" Just as if God may not require us to love him with all our hearts, merely because we are not suited with him; and just as if we were not to blame for being of such a bad temper and disposition, merely because we are thoroughly settled in it, and have

no heart to be otherwise; just as if the worse any one is, the less he is to blame—than which nothing can be more absurd.—Truly, I cannot but think, that, by this, we are so far from being excused, that, even merely for this, we deserve eternal damnation: For what can be much worse than be so thoroughly settled and fixed in such a bad temper of mind?—But, notwithstanding all that I have offered to clear this point heretofore, I will add, that if it is not just for God to require any more of us than we *can do*, i. e. any more than we have, not only a *natural*, but a *moral* power to perform*—then these things will necessarily follow:

[* ☞ It has been questioned by some whether the Author has expressed himself on this part of his subject with his usual perspicuity and correctness. If, by requiring "more than we have natural or moral power to perform," he meant only that more was *required*, or was necessary, to procure the divine favor, than we have natural strength or moral dispositions to perform, and that God might justly suspend his favor until this was in some way accomplished, his reasoning may perhaps be correct: But if he meant, as his words seem to import, that God might justly require *of us*, as a condition of his favor, what we have neither natural nor moral power to perform, and, by requiring this, lay us under an obligation to perform a natural impossibility, then his reasoning is evidently unsound and inconclusive: For must not God's law be founded in the reason and nature of things, and his demands, in every instance, be proportioned, not indeed to the moral, but to the natural power and capacity of his creatures? The Author is himself a strenuous advocate for this principle, throughout the greater part of this work. In page 95th, he remarks that "all the perfec-"tion which God requires of any of his creatures, angels or men, is a "measure of knowledge and love bearing an exact proportion to their nat-"ural powers?"—But why *in exact proportion to their natural powers*, if, in the nature of the case, it was not impossible that their obligations should ever transcend these powers?

The Author appears to have been led into this mistake by supposing that whatever was necessary to our salvation, God might justly propose to us, and require of us, as a condition of our salvation: But is not this wholly to overlook the circumstances of the case? Could an offer of salvation, upon any conditions, have been made to fallen man, without the intervention of a Savior? The language which God must necessarily have held to him, in these circumstances, was that of a righteous Judge, condemning him to everlasting death. A law which could give life, or even propose life, was not admissible; and it was not admissible for this plain reason, that no terms could be named which would be proper for God to accept, and which, at the same time, the sinner was naturally able to perform. It is believed, therefore, that we should need both a Redeemer and Sanctifier, although it were not just for God to require of us more than we have natural power to fulfil.—We should need a Redeemer to make an atonement for us;—a work which we could never accomplish, nor be required to accomplish ourselves: We should need a Sanctifier, to renew our hearts, and restore us to the image of God—not indeed because we have no *natural* power to perform this work; for we have this power, and God requires us to exercise

1. *That there was not the least need of Christ's dying for us as our Redeemer:* For, did we need him to make any atonement or satisfacion for our sins ?...Surely no: for God could not justly require of us more satisfaction for our sins than we were able to make; for that would be to require more than we can do. —Did we need him to purchase the divine favor and eternal life for us ?...Surely no: for God could not justly require any more of us, as a condition of his favor and eternal life, than we ourselves were able to do.—Did we need him to purchase an abatement of the law ?...Surely no: for God could not, in his law, justly require of us more than we could do; and we did not need to have the law brought down lower than this: Well, therefore, might St. Paul tell the Galatians that *if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain*....Gal. ii. 21: For if our doing as well as we can, in the sense before explained, is all that *righteousness* that God can justly require, this alone most certainly would be every way sufficient for our salvation: nor did we need a Savior any more than the angels in heaven; for we have just as much power *to do as as well as we can*, as they have *to do as well as they can:* To say the contrary, is a contradiction in express terms.

2. *Nor was there the least need that the holy spirit should be sent into the world, to grant any inward assistance, to enable us to do our duty:* For we had a full and perfect power to do all our duty, without any such assistance: for God could not justly require of us any more than we could do; and every one is *able* to do what he *can*, without any assistance.

So that, if this principle be true *that God cannot justly require of us any more than we can do*, it is plain we neither needed a *Redeemer* nor a *Sanctifier:* so that all the infinite pains which God has taken for our redemption and salvation, has been unnecessary and fruitless. To do as well as we could, was all

it—but because we are totally depraved, and shall never employ our natural faculties in returning unto God, until moved to it by the operations of his holy spirit.

It will be seen that the exceptions taken against the Author's reasoning in this place, apply so far only as the question of *natural* power is concerned.]

that would have been needful ; and this is still as much required as ever : So that we are just where we should have been, if nothing had ever been done for us : So that this notion entirely undermines and subverts the whole *christian religion*, in supposing that all the extraordinary and wonderful provision therein made for the salvation of sinners was needless ; for if all was needless, then the whole is perfectly incredible—for it is incredible to suppose that God would do *so much*, and *such great* things, when there was no need of it : so that this notion leads directly to infidelity : Yea, if this principle be true, we may be certain that the gospel is full of deceit ; for the gospel every where supposes sinners to have been in a *helpless*, *undone* state, and that they might justly have been left so, and perished forever : and it every where represents it as owing entirely to the free grace and infinitely great goodness of God, that he sent his Son into the world to be a Savior, and the holy spirit to be a Sanctifier ; *all which*, upon this principle, is notoriously false : for we were not in a *helpless*, *undone* condition ; being able, of ourselves, to do *all* that God could justly require of us, in order to eternal life. Nor did we need to be beholden to God for his grace and goodness, his Son or his spirit ; being able, of ourselves, to do *all* that which he could justly require at our hands : Yea, upon this principle, the gospel offers the *highest affront* to human nature, in that it supposes us to be such vile, helpless, undone, guilty wretches, when, indeed, and in truth, we are not : And, therefore, so long as men really believe this notion, they cannot possibly but hate the doctrines of the gospel, and oppose them : and so, in fact, it has always been.

To conclude, therefore, since it is so evident from the *law*, and so evident from the *gospel*, that we are sinful, guilty, helpless, undone creatures, had not we better give in to it, and come down, and lie in the dust, before the Lord, who knows what we are, whether we will own it or no ? Had we not better own his law to be holy, just, and good, and acknowledge that we lie at his sovereign mercy, and be willing to be beholden to free grace, through Jesus Christ, for our salvation ; since we must

do so, or never be saved? What will it profit us to fly in his face, and say, *It is not just for him to require more than we can do, and then damn us for not doing?* when all that he requires, is only that we *love God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves*, which, in the nature of things, is infinitely reasonable—and when all our impotency arises only from our sinfulness, and so, instead of extenuating our fault, only discovers how sinful we are. Surely, since all the world stand guilty before God, really guilty, and are so accounted by him, we all had best to stop our mouths, and own the sentence just, by which we stand condemned, while it is a time of mercy: for who can tell but God may pity us?

There is but one way now left to evade the force of what has been said. To a strict demonstration, the law is not, and cannot be abated: there is now no way, therefore, but to deny that there *ever was such a law*. But then, if God be what I suppose him to be, to a demonstration the law must be such too: there is no way, therefore, but to deny that there is *any such* GOD! Well, but if God be not what I suppose, *what is he?* Why, we may see the whole scheme, by the following *objection*, in a few words.

OBJ. *God is a being of infinite understanding and almighty power, perfectly disposed to seek the good and happiness of his creatures as his* LAST END. *He loves virtue, and rewards it, merely because it tends to make them happy: He hates vice, and punishes it, merely because it tends to make them miserable: All he has in view, in his commands and prohibitions—in his promises and threatenings, is the good, and nothing but merely the good, of his creatures; yea, he esteems things to be virtuous, merely because they tend to make us happy....and vicious, merely because they tend to make us miserable: And now, therefore, if we look upon things as he does, and prosecute the same end—if we love and practise virtue with a sincere view to our own happiness, as our* LAST END, *we do all that God would have us do. And how can we, if we weigh things, but most heartily and sincerely love so good a God....so kind a father, who so dearly loves us, and so tenderly seeks our good?*

Ans. True, if God were verily *such an one*, the most wicked man in the world could not but love him. Self-love would make it natural. Even *publicans* love those who love them; and are good to those who are kind to them....*Mat.* v. Did men firmly believe God to be such an one, they could not, indeed, possibly be at enmity against him. Self-love would not admit of it: Men would not need any *grace* to make them love God: *Nature* would make them love him: They could not but love him, so long as they love themselves. And now, if God, indeed, be such an one, I readily own there is no truth in my whole scheme; but, from first to last, it is all a mistake: for it is altogether built upon a supposition that there is a God, *of a temper essentially different.*

But then I would *query*, if God be such an one....if he aims only at his creatures' happiness, why does he ever inflict misery upon them? If he means only to make them happy, why does he ever make them miserable? Why did he drown the *old world*....burn *Sodom*....and why does he damn sinners to all eternity?

It cannot be because *justice requires it:* for, upon this scheme, *justice does not require it*: For, upon this scheme, sin does, in strict justice, deserve no punishment at all.

A crime deserves no punishment any farther than it is blameworthy: A crime is blame-worthy, no farther than we are under obligations to do otherwise. According to their scheme, all our obligations to be virtuous result merely from its tendency to make us happy:* Upon their scheme, therefore, a sinner

[* ☞ The *scheme* which the Author here opposes, is that which founds the obligation to virtue, *solely* upon the tendency of virtue itself to promote individual happiness—a scheme of perfect selfishness, and pregnant with all the absurd consequences which the Author has endeavored to attach to it.

There is another theory distinct from this, and not liable to the same objections, which founds our obligations to *virtue* upon its tendency to promote public happiness, or the good of God's creatures, collectively considered. This theory, it will be recollected, the Author opposes in a *note*, page 31st, where he more than intimates that our obligations to virtue arise, not from *the mere will of God*, nor from *any tendency in virtue* to promote our own happiness, or the happiness of others, but wholly from *the intrinsic moral fitness of things*, considered absolutely. But is there no difficulty in conceiving of the *moral fitness* or *unfitness* of things, aside from their ob-

is to blame for his sins, merely because sin is cross to his own happiness, and tends to make him miserable ;—there is no other evil in sin but this. This is the only reason why God hates it—is set against it, and disposed to punish it : This is the only reason why he would have them avoid it ; and this is the only reason they are to blame for it. No man is blame-worthy for sin any farther than he was under obligations to the contrary. All our obligations to virtue, according to them, arise from its natural tendency to make us happy : and, therefore, all the evil of sin must arise from its natural tendency to make us miserable : This misery, therefore, is exactly equal to the evil of sin ; for *all* the evil of sin arises from it, or rather *consists* in it : This misery is *all* the evil of sin ; and this misery is, therefore, *all* that renders sin blame-worthy, i. e. I am to blame for taking a course that tends to make me miserable : And why ?....Merely because it tends to make me miserable ; for that reason, and for no other : Therefore, I am so much to blame, and no more, for what I do, than according to the degree of its tendency to make me miserable : This misery, therefore, which naturally results from what I do, is equal to my blame—and is, therefore, the *worst*, and *all* that I deserve ; for no crime deserves to be punished, any farther than it is blame-worthy.* And from the

vious tendency to promote or hinder the happiness of the moral world ? True, it may be said that our perceptions of *right* and *wrong* are wholly distinct from those of *happiness* and *misery* : But is it certain that they are wholly distinct from our perceptions of the natural tendency of *right* and *wrong* to produce these different ends ? Why does it appear *right* to do justice between man and man, but because public and private happiness evidently require it ?

Perhaps, however, upon a strict enquiry, it would appear that our obligations to virtue rest not wholly upon any single principle ; but are grounded upon all those *considerations* which, according to various schemes, may be justly admitted as proper motives to virtuous action : such as the *moral fitness* of things—the *tendency* of virtue—the glory of God, and the authority of his law. To reduce all to a single principle, as different theorists have done, is not only to exclude some motive which ought unquestionably to influence our conduct, but to hold up those which are confused, if not unjust, instead of such as are clear and determinate.]

* OBJ. "*But are we not, according to their scheme, under obligations resulting from the* authority *and* command *of God ?*"

ANS. We are, according to their scheme, under no obligations to regard the *authority* and *command* of God at all ; only, and merely, and purely,

whole, to a demonstration, it follows, that, upon their scheme, sin deserves no inflicted pain or misery, by way of punishment, over and above the pain or misery which results necessarily from its own nature: And now, if sin does not deserve any such punishment, then justice does not require the Governor of the world to inflict any such upon any of his creatures, though ever so sinful; for justice does not require him to inflict a punishment that is not at all deserved—yea, rather it seems cruelty so to do. If, therefore, justice did not require it, why did God drown the *old world*, and burn *Sodom*—and why does he damn sinners to all eternity?

Certainly he did not *aim at their good* when he drowned the *old world* and burnt *Sodom;* and certainly he cannot *aim at sinners' good* in their eternal damnation. There are some calamities in this life, which God might be supposed to send upon his creatures for their good; and indeed, all things considered, they are well adapted to do them good; yea, and are all made to work together for good to them that love God, and may be numbered among their mercies: But what shall we say when God drowns a whole world, burns up several cities, and damns to all eternity millions of his creatures—yea, and all for nothing, when they deserved no ill at his hands, not the least! *Where is his justice now?* Yea, *where is his goodness?* Or what does he mean? What does he intend?

Certainly he cannot intend to deal so severely with some of his poor creatures, who never deserved any ill at his hands, merely for the *good of others*, to fright, and warn, and deter them from vice; for this would be *to do evil that good might come*—

because it is for our interest so to do—as themselves acknowledge.

OBJ. "*But are we not, according to them,* obliged *to have regard to* our neighbor's *welfare?*

ANS. Only, merely, purely because it is for our own interest to do so: for, according to them, all our obligations to practise any virtue, arise, originally, only from its being for our own interest. The language of such a practice plainly is, that there is not one being in the whole system worth regarding, but myself:—*I am, and besides me there is no other!* I will regard none, but just to answer my own ends; and so, really and strictly, regard none but myself: This is a *religion* that will suit *nature;* and, in this sense, may justly be called *natural religion.*

yea, this would be the way rather *that good might never come*; for how could any of his creatures or subjects heartily love him or like his conduct, while they behold millions of their fellow-creatures suffering, for nothing at all, such infinite pains under his hands? *Where is his justice?* would they all cry: *And where is his goodness?* They would hate him, and flee from him, and dread a government so infinitely tyrannical. Indeed, to inflict a proper punishment, in case of just desert, is a good thing—tends to maintain government, and make men afraid of sin, and stand in awe of the great Law-giver and Judge of the world: Yea, it is a beautiful conduct, and tends to make God appear amiable in the eyes of all holy beings....*Rev.* xix. 1—6. But to afflict and torment poor creatures, who do not *at all* deserve it, and that forever, cannot possibly answer any good end; but, of necessity, must promote a thousand bad ones, when, all the time, the true state of the case is publicly known and understood throughout all God's dominions. It is just as if a father, who has ten children, should tie up five every Monday morning, and whip them almost to death for nothing in the world but to make the rest love him, and be good and obedient children: And would they love him any the more for this? Yea, they could not but hate so cruel a tyrant: Now, therefore, if their scheme be true, why did God drown the *old world*, and burn *Sodom*? And why does he damn sinners to all eternity?

Yea, if sin deserves no inflicted punishment, as, upon their scheme, it does not, why does God ever once inflict the least, the very least punishment for it in all his dominions? And that which, though not, in its own nature, more unaccountable, yet is more surprising, why has God, all along, from the beginning of the world, been inflicting such a dreadful train of punishments for sin? Why did God turn the *angels* out of heaven for their first sin, and doom them to an eternal hell, when they did not at all deserve it? Why did God threaten Adam with death in case of disobedience?—Why is death said to be the wages of sin?—Why did God cause the earth to open and swallow up Korah and his company?—Why did God cause the carcases of

six hundred thousand to fall in the wilderness?—Why did God strike Uzza dead? And why a thousand more things which have happened in the sight of the world? Surely it cannot be for *our good* to be struck dead and sent to hell; and surely it cannot be for the *good of any* in all God's world, that shall see or ever hear of it, when, all the while, it is publicly known that we deserve no ill at God's hands—no, not the least.

And now, after all, to torment us in hell forever, for nothing in the world, *where the fire shall never be quenched, and the worm shall never die;* yea, and to appoint a day of judgment, under a pretence of doing nothing but strict justice; and to summon all worlds together, to see and hear, to the end that his impartiality and justice might appear to all, when, all the while, he knows, and all the world knows, that his poor creatures deserve no ill at his hands—no, not the least! *What can he mean?*

Yea, and that which is a great deal worse than all, that I even shudder to think of it, he not only makes a law to punish sinners eternally in hell, when there was no reason for it, but puts it in execution upon his poor creatures who do not deserve it; but, having one only Son, of equal glory with himself, he delivers him to death, in the room and stead of sinners; pretending that sin was so bad a thing, *that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission*, and therefore his own Son must die, to the end *he might be just, while he justified the sinner that should believe in him*—while, all the time, if their scheme is true, he knew, and all the world will know, sooner or later, that sin never deserved the least punishment at his hands!

To conclude, therefore, if God be what they suppose, I grant the scheme I have laid down is not right; and it is equally evident that the *Bible* is not right neither: for the *law* and the *gospel*, the *Old Testament* and the *New*, every where suppose, and take it for granted, that sin is an infinite evil—deserves the wrath and curse of God...all the miseries of this life, and death itself, and the pains of hell forever;—the *law* threatens all this. According to the *gospel*, Christ has died to redeem us from all

this, as what we *justly deserve:* The *Bible*, therefore, in a word, supposes we deserve it all; but their *scheme* supposes we do not. The God that made the *Bible* has no doubt of it; he made his *law* upon this ground, and upon this footing he gave his Son to die....has appointed a day of judgment, and prepared a place of torment—*a lake of fire and brimstone:* but *their God* is of quite another mind....can see no such infinite evil in sin—yea, no evil at all in it, but what results from its tendency to make us miserable: *Their God*, therefore, is not *the God of Israel*, nor *the God that made the Bible;* and, therefore, is *no God*....is nothing but an image framed in their own fancy, suited to their own hearts.

Besides, their *idea of God* is contrary not only thus to the general tenor of scripture, but also to many plain and express declarations. (1.) It is manifest that God does not make the happiness of his creatures his *last end*, from *Exod.* ix. 16—*Numb.* xiv. 13—21—*Lev.* x. 3—*Psalm* cvi. 8—*Ezek.* xx. throughout. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 21, 22, 23, and xxxviii. 23, and xxxix. 6, 7, 13, 21, 22—*Rom.* ix. 22, 23—*Rom.* xi. 36—*Rev.* iv. 11. (2.) It is manifest that God does not require his creatures to love and obey him merely because it tends to make them happy so to do, from *Exod.* xx. 2—*Lev.* xix. 2—*Psalm* xxix. 2, and xcvi. 4, 8, and cxlviii. 13—I. *Cor.* vi. 20. (3.) It is manifest that God does not threaten and punish sin merely because it tends to make his creatures miserable, from I. *Sam.* ii. 29, 30—II. *Sam.* xii. 7—14—*Psalm* li. 4—*Mal.* i. 6, 7, 8, 14.

But to conclude;—how sad and dreadful a thing will it be, for poor sinners, when they come to die, and enter into the world of spirits, there to find that the God they once loved and trusted in, was nothing but an image framed in their own fancy! They hated the *God of Israel*, and hated his *law*, and therefore would not believe that *God* or his *law* were indeed what they were. They were resolved to have a *God* and a *law* more to their minds. How dreadful will their disappointment be! How dreadful their surprise! They would never own they were enemies to God; now they see their enmity was so great as to

make them resolutely, notwithstanding the plainest evidence, even to deny him to be what he was : And how righteous will the ways of the Lord appear to be, in that he gave such over to strong delusions to believe a lie, who did not love, and would not believe the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness ?.... II. *Thes.* ii. 10, 11, 12 : So, the *Gentile nations*, not liking to retain God in their knowledge, were given over to reprobate minds, and left every nation to make *such a God* as best pleased themselves....*Rom.* i.—But it is time to proceed to the next *use*.

SECTION VI.

RULES OF TRIAL.

Use II. Which may be *of examination*. What has been said may serve to clear up, to real saints, their gracious state, and may afford matter of conviction to others.

And here I would take the humble believer in his element, that is, in his closet, where he retires from the noise and business of the world—where he loves to be alone, to read the Bible....to meditate on the perfections of God, and think of his works and ways—where he mourns, and prays, and loves God, and gives up himself to him : In a serious hour of sweet retirement, when you are *most yourself*, and your thoughts most about you, I would enquire, *What are your views ? And what is the inward temper of your mind ? And how do you live ? And what is it that habitually influences you in your daily conduct ?*

Do you *know* God ? Do you see him to be such an one as he really is—even such an one as the scriptures represent him to be ? And do you account him infinitely glorious and amiable in being such an one ? And do you begin to love him with all your heart ? Do you esteem him so as to exult in his supremacy and absolute sovereignty ? And so will seek his glory, and value his honor and interest, as to give up yourself to live to him ; and so delight in him, as to choose him for your present and everlasting portion ? True, your remaining blindness and ignorance is very great : but do you not feel it, and groan under it as your burden, and hate yourself for it as your sin, lamenting the settishness of your heart, that you should be so

senseless and brutish, after so many outward advantages and inward helps, and amidst such clear manifestations made of God and of his infinite glory, in his word, and in all his works and ways; and feel that you are wholly to blame for the stupidity and unteachableness of your heart—ready to say with him of old, *So foolish am I, and ignorant, I am as a beast before thee?...* Psalm lxxiii. 22. Your disesteem of God, and unconcernedness about his honor and interest, is great, and you have still a disposition to hate to live upon God only, without any thing else to take comfort in, as the portion of your soul; and so you are inclined to forget God....to forsake him....to depart, and go away, and fall in love with something else, and seek another resting-place, and something else to take comfort in: But do you not feel this your remaining want of conformity to God's law, and native contrariety to it? And do you not hate it, and hate yourself for it? Do you not groan under it, and lament it, and watch, and pray, and fight against it, feeling the infinite sinfulness of it? saying, *The law is holy, just, and good; but I am carnal, sold under sin: O wretched man that I am!*....Rom. vii. 14, 24.

And what are the *grounds* of your love to God, and from what motives is it that you are influenced to love him? Does God, indeed, appear infinitely great, glorious, and amiable in being what he is? And do you love him because he is just such an one? Do you love to meditate his incomprehensibly glorious perfections, and wonder and adore? Are you glad that he knows all things, and can do every thing? Are the various manifestations of divine wisdom, in the moral government of the world, glorious in your eyes? Does it suit your heart that God governs the world as he does? Do you love that the pride of all flesh should be brought low, and the Lord alone be exalted? Are you glad that God loves righteousness and hates iniquity as he does; and do you heartily approve the strictness of his law in the matter of your duty, and the severity thereof against the least sin? And are you sweetly sensible of the infinite goodness of God, and of his truth and faithfulness? And does God

appear infinitely glorious because he is just what he is? And is this the primary foundation of your love?...In a word, do you see him as the great Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the world—as the Redeemer, Sanctifier, and Savior of his people, as he has thus revealed himself, by his word, and in his works; and do you love him for being what he is? And do you also feel the powerful influence of those superadded obligations you are under to love him?—In other cases, when we love any thing, we know why we love it: so, also, do believers know why they love the Lord their God.

And does it not appear to you infinitely *reasonable* that you should love God with all your heart—that you should be wholly his, and wholly for him, and make him your all, while you behold his infinite glory....his complete all-sufficiency....his original, entire right to you, and absolute authority over you? And does not his law, in requiring you to do so, appear to be infinitely right, perfectly holy, just, and good....worthy to stand in full force forever, unabated and unaltered? And do you not see that the least want of conformity to this law, or transgression of it, is infinitely vile, and that a perfect conformity thereto deserves no thanks? And do you not feel yourself wholly to blame for your not being altogether such as the law requires? Hypocrites are generally very ignorant of the law, in its true meaning and strictness; and so are ignorant of their want of conformity unto it, and of their inward contrariety to it....*Rom.* vii. 8, 9—for otherwise all hypocrites would know certainly that they have no grace. But yet hypocrites, at least many of them, know something about the law, and their want of conformity to it, and something about their inward contrariety to it; and hence may complain of the blindness of their minds, the deadness of their hearts, and of their pride and worldliness: but no hypocrite is heartily sensible that the law is holy, just, and good in requiring perfection; and that he himself is entirely to blame for not being perfectly holy, and that the fault is wholly his. Some will say, "I desire to love God, and to aim at his glory, "and do my duty; but no man is, or can be perfect: and God

"does not require more of us than we can do:" And so they think themselves excusable, and are not sensible that it is infinitely vile in them not to love God with all their hearts. Others will say, "I can do nothing of myself: it is Christ that must "do all. I desire to love God, but I cannot: It is the spirit "that must fill my heart with love, and God is the sovereign "dispenser of his grace; so that, if I am dead, and dull, and "senseless, and stupid, I cannot help it:" And so they also think themselves excusable, and are not sensible that it is infinitely vile in them not to love God with all their hearts. But now, how stands the case with you? Have you any secret way of excusing yourself? Or do you see that the law is holy, just, and good, and that you only are to blame, wholly to blame, and altogether without excuse; yea, and exceedingly vile, for all your blindness and deadness, and for every thing wherein you are not just what the law requires you to be? It is this which makes believers sensible of their desert of damnation, all their lives long, and loathe and abhor themselves before the Lord: and it is this which causes them more and more to see their need of Christ and free grace, and admire and prize the glorious gospel. *O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*....Rom. vii. 24, 25.

And do you begin to be of a disposition really to love your *neighbor* as *yourself?* Are your affections under the government of a spirit of disinterested impartiality, so that you are disposed to value yourself only for those properties in you that are good and excellent, and only in proportion to their worth and excellence; and, by this rule, to esteem your neighbors, your friends, and your foes, and all men? And do you hate a contrary disposition in you? And is your heart full of love, and kindness, and benevolence, wishing well to all, seeking the good of all, and even grieved when your enemies are in adversity?

And to conclude;—does love to God and to your neighbor govern you in your thoughts, affections, and actions, and daily influence you to live to God, and do good in the world; so

that now you are not your own, but given up to God, to do his will, seeking his glory? A holy life does as naturally proceed from a holy heart, as a stream does from a living fountain.

Once you was darkness: But are you now light in the Lord? Once, as to right spiritual views of God....your neighbor, or yourself....of this world or the next, you had none;—you was blind....your understanding was darkened; and so your apprehensions were wrong, and you loved your wrong apprehensions, ...and took pleasure in error, falshood, and sin....and hated the light—hated truth and duty;—once you was wholly devoid of the divine image, and destitute of all good—yea, and you was wholly averse from God, and full of all evil: And did you ever see and feel this to be your state? And have you, by divine grace, been recovered out of it? Have you been effectually taught that your light was darkness, and your knowledge ignorance, and been made sensible of the blindness of your mind? And have you learnt that all your seeming goodness was counterfeit, and that in you did dwell no good thing—yea, that your seeming goodness was real wickedness, in that your heart was in perfect contrariety to God and his law? Has divine light shined in your heart, and your native darkness, as well as contracted blindnesss, been dispelled from your soul; so that now your views of God—of your neighbor and yourself—of this world and the next, are right, and your apprehensions according to truth? And has the truth made you free? Do you now look upon God, in some measure, according to the capacity of a creature, as he does upon himself, when he takes upon him the character of most high GOD, supreme LORD, and sovereign GOVERNOR of the whole world, and says, *I am the Lord....that is my name, and besides me there is no other God?* And do you see it is infinitely fit that all the world should love, worship, and adore him? Do you now look upon your neighbors in some measure as God does, when he commands you to love them as yourself; and so see that it is perfectly right that you should? And do you look upon yourself, and every thing in this world, in some measure as God does, when he commands

you to deny yourself, and forsake all things for his sake; and see that it is most fit and reasonable to die to yourself and to this world, and give up yourself to God, to love him, and live to him, and delight in him forever? And do you understand that the things which are seen are temporal, and that the things which are unseen are eternal? And do all possible troubles in the ways of God, in some measure, appear only as light afflictions, which are but for a moment, and not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed? Do you thus know the truth....and has the truth made you free from your old servitude; and are you effectually influenced and governed by these views and apprehensions, and this sense of things, to bring forth fruit to God, an hundred-fold, or sixty-fold, or at least thirty-fold? For divine knowledge is efficacious, and the holy and divine effects and fruits are always equal to the degree of knowledge: (I. John iii. 6)...*And every branch which bringeth not forth fruit, is cut off and cast into the fire.* Are you thus born again, and become a new creature, and learnt to live a new and divine life?

And is it not now most manifest to you that all this is so far from having been the product of nature, that all that is in nature....every natural propensity of the heart, has, from first to last, been utterly against the change, and made a constant and mighty resistance? And do you not plainly perceive, that, from first to last, the work has been begun and carried on by God himself?

And does it not appear to you as the most astonishing goodness in God, and owing to nothing but his sovereign free grace, that you have thus been called out of darkness into marvellous light—turned from the power of sin and satan, to serve the living God? And do you not plainly see there is nothing but the same infinite goodness and free grace to move God to carry on and complete this work in your heart, and that so, if ever you get to heaven, the whole of your salvation, from first to last, will be absolutely and entirely to be attributed to free grace? And have you not hence learnt to live upon free grace, through Jesus Christ, for all things?

And do you not perceive that he, who has begun, does *actually* carry on the work of grace in your hearts? And that all the external dispensations of providence and internal influences of the spirit concur in their operation, to humble you, and wean you from the world, and imbitter sin—to bring you nearer to God, and to love him, and to live to him, and to live upon him—and to make you more serious....more spiritually-minded and heavenly-minded....more watchful and prayerful, and more loving, and kind, and tender-hearted, and obliging to all mankind, both friends and foes—and to make you daily attend upon the duties of your particular calling, and upon all the common business of life, as a servant of God, in singleness of heart, doing service to the Lord?

And although you was once *dead in sin*, and wholly without strength, yet do you not now feel that you are spiritually alive, and so put into a capacity for a spiritual activity, and that you are engaged to be active for God?....*Not that your sufficiency is of yourself*, as once you thought it was: for you *are not sufficient of yourself, as of yourself; but your sufficiency is of God:* Yet do you not find that, *through Christ's strengthening, you can do all things?* And do you not, from the heart, hate the way of lazy, dead-hearted hypocrites, who sit still, and carelessly cry, "We can do nothing—it is Christ that must do all;" and, under a notion of not doing any thing in their own strength, gratify their laziness, and do nothing at all! Accursed laziness! Accursed hypocrisy!—Do you not feel, I say, that you are put into a capacity for spiritual activity? And are you not engaged to be active for God? For you are *his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, that you might *walk in them.*—While the spirit of God is taking down the power of sin in your heart, and slaying your corruptions, are you not also *crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts?* While God is *working in you to will and to do*, are you not *working out your salvation with fear and trembling*....with filial fear and holy concern?—While the spirit of God gives you *might in the inner man*, do not you *put on the whole armour of God, and fight with flesh and*

blood....with *principalities and powers?* This is the way of believers. And the spirit does not come upon them by fits, as it did upon Balaam, but *dwells* in them and abides in them forever—*to purify them from all iniquity, and make them a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Finally, do you not experience that your religion is something *real* and *perceptible*, and see that it is *specifically* different from any thing that possibly can arise merely from a principle of self-love? You perceive your views of God, and sense of his greatness, glory, and beauty; and you perceive your sense of the world's emptiness, and of your own natural vileness and wretchedness; and your love to God....your weanedness from the world, and your mourning for sin are perceptible: And is it not easy to perceive why you love God—are weaned from the world, and mourn for sin; namely, because God is infinitely lovely, the world empty and worthless, and sin the greatest evil? And while these views and affections effectually influence you to all holy living, their genuineness is made still more evident and plain: and, from the whole, you arise to a rational and scriptural knowledge of your gracious state.

From what has been said upon this subject, a great variety of other questions might be put to the believer; but the whole has been treated so plainly and practically, that I need add no more: And if graceless persons had it in their hearts to be honest and impartial, they might easily know that they are strangers to real religion: But if they have not the thing itself, they will either work up something like it, or else deny that there is any such thing: for *he that doth evil, hateth the light;* and so does he who has a rotten heart. And hence some cry, "The "best have their failings;" and they watch and catch at the failings of such as are accounted godly, and dwell upon them, and magnify them; and so quiet their consciences, and go on in their sins: Others cry, "The best are dead sometimes;" and so maintain their hopes, although they lie dead whole months and years together, and live in sin, and never come to sound repentance: Others cry, "You will discourage weak christians;"

meaning themselves.—Just as if there were a sort of christians that cannot bear the light, nor stand a scriptural trial. What will they do when they come before the awful bar of the heart-searching God! Others cry, "But every christian does not experience alike;" and so, though they are destitute of the very essence and life of religion, yet they hope all is well; and many are confident that these things are not so; "For," say they, "if these things be true, who then shall be saved?"—I answer, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life; and few there be that find it: But wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many go in thereat*....Mat. vii. 13, 14. And mark what follows in the next verse, (15)...*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's-clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves:* (ver. 16)....*Ye shall know them by their fruits.* By what fruits? Why, this is the constant character of false prophets throughout the Bible, that they cry, *Peace and safety, and heal the wound of poor sinners slightly, and daub with untempered mortar;* i. e. they make religion to be an easier thing than it is—more agreeable to corrupt nature; and so encourage sinners to rest in something short of true grace. So the *Pharisees* did, notwithstanding all their pretended strictness; and so the *Arminians* do, notwithstanding all their seeming zeal for good works; and so the *Antinomians* do, notwithstanding all their pretences to extraordinary light, and joy, and zeal, and purity, and holiness. And this is the common character of all false prophets, and false teachers, and heretics, that, being enemies to true religion, they cut out a false scheme in their heads, to suit their own hearts; and so, however greatly they may differ, in many things, yet herein all agree, to make religion an easier thing than the Bible does, and to make the gate wider, and the way broader, than Christ and his apostles; and, by this *mark*, the difference between them and the true prophets may always be certainly known: and therefore Christ having just said, *Strait is the gate, and narrow the way*, &c. immediately adds, *Beware of false prophets—by their fruits ye shall know them;* for they all invent some easier way

to heaven, though it may be *in sheep's clothing*, i. e. under a show of *great strictness :* And this, their invention, being *false*, they are thus denominated *false prophets :* And thus, what has been said concerning the nature of true religion, may serve to clear up the believer's gracious state ; and may afford matter of conviction to others.

SECTION VII.

WE HAVE GREAT REASON TO BE HUMBLE, AND THANKFUL, AND LIVE ENTIRELY DEVOTED TO GOD.

USE III. *Of humiliation.* What has been said may be improved by *sinners* and *saints* to promote their humiliation: For by the law is the knowledge of sin ; and a sight and sense of our sinfulness tends to abase us before the Lord.

In this glass of the *law*, *sinners* may see what they are, in heart and life ; and, by this rule, they may learn *how* God looks upon them. There is a knowledge of ourselves—of our hearts and lives, that is *natural* to us. Men, by their power of self-reflection, have a sort of an acquaintance with themselves: they know their present views and designs—their present inclinations and way of living ; and remember, more or less, how they have lived in years past : But men are naturally very ignorant of the nature of God, and of his holy law ; and so, are very ignorant of themselves, in a *moral* sense—are very insensible *how* God looks upon them, and what their hearts and lives are, compared with God and his holy law. *Natural conscience* has some notions about right and wrong, and so does something towards accusing and condemning men, especially for their grosser sins ; but natural conscience is, for the most part, so blind, and so much asleep, and, in most men, has been so much abused, and brow-beat, and kept under, that it lets men pretty much alone. Men *hold the truth in unrighteousness*, according to the *Apostle*'s phrase, and keep their consciences in chains ; and so are, in a great measure, *without the law ;* and hence, *sin is dead :* for *where there is no law, there is no transgression :* And when men know not the law in its true meaning and extent, they are insensible how they swerve from it, and how contrary they are

to it, and how sinful sin is: But *when the commandment comes, sin revives.*

Think of this, therefore, O sinner, that the infinitely glorious God, your Creator, Preserver, and Governor, deserves to be loved, and lived to, and delighted in with all your heart; and that this is what he requires at your hands: and know it, he hates your hypocritical shows and pretences, so long as that, in heart, he sees you are an enemy to him: You may pretend that you cannot help your heart's being so bad; but God knows you love your corruptions, and hate to have them slain, and love to have them gratified: You love to be proud, and hence you love to be applauded; and the praise of men is sweet, and of greater price with you than the praise of God: you will do more to please the world than to please God—yea, will displease God, to keep in with a wicked world, who hate God; and God knows it: You love to love the world; and hence love to lay worldly schemes, and are secretly ravished with worldly hopes when things are likely to go well, and account no pains too great in worldly pursuits; but you hate to pray in secret—have no heart for God—can take no delight in him; and God knows it. And will you now pretend, for your excuse, that you cannot help your heart's being so bad, when it is *you yourself* that are so bad, and love to be so bad, and hate to cease to be what you are? If God has, by his spirit, awakened your conscience a little, and terrified you with the fears of hell and wrath, it may be your corruptions are somewhat stunned, and honor and worldly gains do not appear so tempting, and you are ready to say that you would willingly part with your reputation, and every thing you have in the world, for an interest in Christ and the divine favor; and now you think you are sincere: but God knows it is all hypocrisy; for he sees you do not care for him, but are only afraid of damnation. And God knows that, if once you should get a false confidence of pardon and the divine favor, you would soon return to folly, as the dog to his vomit, and set out after the world as eagerly as ever; or else vent your corruptions in spiritual pride, and in ranting, enthu-

siastic, wild-fire, and party selfish zeal, as thousands have done, who once felt just as you do now. God, therefore, does not mind your pretences, nor believe your promises; for he knows what you are. You may deceive yourself, but cannot deceive him: He knows your corruptions are stunned, but not mortified; and that your nature is just what it was, and you as really an enemy to God as ever: And, it may be, *you* may see it yet, when you come to find out *how* God looks upon you, and upon your prayers, and tears, and promises: for it is commonly the case with sinners, when they perceive that God is not pleased with their devout pretences, and does not design to save them for their hypocritical duties, by the secret workings of their hearts to discover that they care only for themselves, and are real enemies to God and his law. Love to God, O sinner, is not begotten by the fears of hell, nor by the hopes of heaven. If you do not love God for what he is in himself, you do not love him at all; but only flatter him with your lips, and lie unto him with your tongue. But it may be manifest to you that you do not love him for what he is in himself, because you do not love his law, which bears his image. You do not like the law as a rule for you to live by, for it is too strict for you: and you do not approve of the law as a rule for God to judge you by, for you think it hard for God to damn men for the least sin. Know it, therefore, O sinner, that there is no good in you, or any goodness in your duties; but you are in a state of rebellion—an enemy to God, and to his holy law: come down, and lie in the dust before the Lord, and own the sentence just by which you stand condemned, and be quiet at his feet; and if ever he saves you, forever attribute it wholly to free and sovereign grace. *When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died:* And such an one was you, O believer; and, in some measure, you are such an one still; and, in some respects, your sins are a great deal more aggravated. Oh! never forget the days, and weeks, and months, and years you have formerly spent in sin! *Once I was a persecutor, and a blasphemer, and injurious*, said St. Paul; and his heart bleeds afresh, and he sets himself

down for the *chief of sinners*....I. Tim. i. 13, 15. But what are you now, after all the grace of God....after all the kind methods heaven has taken to reclaim you—and what are your attainments, if you compare yourself and attainments with the holy law of God, in its spiritual nature and divine strictness? Do you feel such a heart towards the great and glorious Governor of the whole world, as becomes you? Think what a God he is, and how angels and saints on high love him: Think of his majesty, and greatness, and glory, and excellence—and how he is the fear, and delight, and joy of all heaven: Think of his original and entire right to you, and absolute authority over you: Think of the vileness of your apostacy, and of the depth of your ruin: Think of redeeming love: Think of converting grace: Think of the many means God has used with you in his providence, and by his spirit: Think of all his loving kindnesses and tender mercies. And think what a beast you are before the Lord! Lie down in the dust, and cry, and mourn, and weep, and let your heart break! Oh, your want of love to God....of zeal for his glory....of delight in his perfections, and of gratitude for all his kindness! Alas, how you disesteem the God that angels love, and comparatively despise the God that all heaven adores! Alas, how careless you are about his honor and interest, and how inactive in his service! Alas, how you disrelish the fountain of all goodness, and the ocean of all blessedness, and hanker after other things, and go away from God, to seek rest elsewhere, and thereby cast infinite contempt upon the delight of heaven, and the joy of angels, the ever-blessed and all-sufficient God! Think of the peculiar obligations God has laid you under by all the secret ways of his providence and grace with you, and of all the infinite pains he has taken with you to make you humble....weaned from the world....devoted to God....loving, kind, tender-hearted, friendly, and obliging to all mankind, and universally holy; and see, and say, 'Was ever wretch so vile! Did ever wretch treat such a God in such a manner, under such circumstances!' Oh, how far, how infinitely far you are from being what you ought to be! This made St. Paul account him-

self *less than the least of all saints, and forget the things that are behind:* his attainments dwindled away, as it were, to nothing, when he compared himself with God's holy law, and thought what he ought to be, and what obligations he was under; and he did, therefore, as it were, set down all that he had hitherto attained for nothing, and feel and act as if he was but just now beginning to live to God. Rom. vii. 14....*The Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin*—verse 24....*O wretched man that I am!*—Phil. iii. 13, 14....*I forget the things which are behind....I reach forth towards those things which are before....I press towards the mark:* and, O believer, go you, and do likewise.

Besides, remember that it is no thanks to you that you are not to this day secure in sin; yea, that you are not one of the vilest and most profane creatures in the world: Your nature was bad enough;—the seeds of every sin were in your heart;—but for restraining or sanctifying grace, you might have been as bad as any in Sodom. And what was it moved God to awaken you, and stop you in your career in sin, and turn you to God?—Was it for your righteousness?...Oh, be ashamed and confounded forever!—For his own sake he has done it, when you was a stubborn, stiff-necked, rebellious creature. And truly, what has been your carriage towards the Lord, compared with the exact rule of duty, the holy law of God, since the day you have known him?...O, remember *Massah*, and *Tabera*, and *Kibroth-hataavah*, and how you have been rebellious against the Lord, ever since he has taken you in hand to subdue you to himself—(Read *Deut.* ix. and see how much your temper has been like theirs:)—And this notwithstanding all the signs and wonders God has wrought before your eyes;—I mean, notwithstanding all the sweet and awful methods God has taken with you, to make you know him, and love him, and fear him, and live to him. There are thousands and thousands whom God never took any such special pains with: Their sins are not like yours: Come down, therefore...sit in the dust...mourn and weep, and loathe and abhor yourself, as long as you live; and ascribe all praise to God, through whose grace alone it is that you are what you are.

Let me here address you in the words of the famous Mr. HOOKER:—"That thou mayest forever, each day that passeth "over thy head, remember it to the Lord, and leave it upon "record in thine own conscience, say—Hadst thou (blessed "Lord) given me the desires of my heart, and left me to my "own will, it is certain I had been in hell long before this day, "when, in the days of my folly and times of my ignorance— "when, out of the desperate wretchedness of my rebellious dis- "position, I was running riot in the ways of wickedness—*when* "*I said to the seers, see not, and to the prophets, prophesy not*— "to Christians...to acquaintance...to governors, admonish not, "counsel not, reprove not, stop me not in the pursuit of sin. "The time was, *I took hold of deceit, and refused to return;* nay, "resolved in the secret purpose of my heart, *I would none of thee* "—I would not have that word of thine reveal or remove my "corruptions—I would none of thy grace that might humble me "and purge me...none of that mercy of thine that might pardon "me...none of that redemption of thine that might save me: "Hadst thou then taken me at my word, and given me what I wish- "ed, and sealed my destruction, saying, 'Be thou forever filthy, "forever stubborn, and forever miserable; thou wouldst nei- "ther be holy nor happy—thou shalt have thy will—sin with "devils, and take thy portion with devils'....Lord, it had been "just with thee, and I justly miserable: But to bear with all my "baseness...to put up with all those wrongs and provocations... "to strive with me for my good, when I took up arms against "thee, and strove against my own good—nay, when I resisted "mercy; and then to take away that resistance, and to cause "me to take mercy, and make it mine, when I used all the "skill I could to hinder my own salvation—Oh! the height.... "the depth....the length....the breadth of this mercy! When "we feel our hearts to be puffed up with the vain apprehension "of our own worth, parts, or performances....what we are and "what we do, look we back to our first beginnings, and judge "aright of our own wretchedness and nothingness, yea, worse "than nothing, in that we not only wanted all good, but we had

"it within us to oppose all good; and that will cause us to sit "down in silence, abased forever. When empty bladders are "grown unto too great bulk and bigness, to prick them is the "readiest way to lessen them: when our empty and vain "minds swell with high thoughts, and high, over-weening con- "ceit of our own worth, learn we to stab and pierce our hearts "with the righteous judgment of our own natural vileness, which "will (or at least may) let out that frothy haughtiness that lifts "us up beyond our measure: Tell thy heart, and commune "with thy conscience, and say, It is not my good nature, that "I am not roaring amongst the wretches of the world, in the "road and broad way of ruin and destruction—that I am not "wallowing in all manner of sin with the worst of men. It is "not my good nature....no thank to any thing that I have, that "I am not upon the chain with malefactors, or in a dungeon "with witches; for whatever hell hath, it is in this heart of "mine naturally—a Cain here, a Judas here, nay, a devil here. "The time was, (O that, with an abased heart, I may ever think "of that time) I never looked after the spiritual good of my soul, "or whether I had a soul or no: what would become of me and "it, was the least of my care....the furthest end of my thoughts; "nay, loth was I to hear of, or know these things—when they "were revealed, unwilling to receive them, or give way to them "when they were offered: How did I stop mine ears, shut mine "eyes, and harden my heart? What ways, means, and devices "did I use and invent, to shut out the light of truth....to stop the "passage and power of the word, that it might not convince me "—that it might not reform me....might not recall me from my "evil ways? How often have I secretly wished that either the "word was taken out of the place, or I from it, that it might not "trouble me in my sinful distempers; and when I had least "good, I had most ease, and took the greatest content. Oh, "that such a wretch should thus live, and yet live! To be thus "sinful! O that I might be forever abased for it."*

* Mr. HOOKER's *Application of Redemption*—Vol. I. page 97—100.

Thus the law, as a rule of life, may be improved to the humiliation of the people of God, in that it may serve to keep fresh in their minds their native universal depravity....their former wickedness—and to discover their remaining sinfulness: And I may here observe, that it is believers' *peculiar acquaintance* with the law, in its true meaning, strictness, and purity, that is the occasion of their *peculiar acquaintance* with their own hearts: And while the law daily shows them what they are, it learns them more and more their need of a redeemer and sanctifier, and daily puts them upon going to God, through Jesus Christ, for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace. The law makes way for the gospel; and a sense of sin, weakness, and unworthiness, makes Christ and gospel-grace precious, and stirs up a man to repentance, faith, and prayer. Deluded, therefore, are those poor souls that say, "We must not look into our hearts, "nor labor after a sense of our sins and sinfulness; for that is "legal, and tends to discouragement: but we must look only to "Christ and free grace, and believe and rejoice, and a sense of "the love of Christ will humble us:" Just as if the great business of Christ was, to keep men from a sight and sense of their sins; and just as if a man could be truly humbled, without seeing what he is, compared with God and his holy law: But, poor souls, they feel a legal, discouraged frame always, when they have any sight and sense of their sinfulness, and it damps their faith (and if they were but thoroughly sensible of their sinfulness, it would kill their faith) and joy: and, therefore, they conclude it is not a good way to look into their hearts; no good can be got by it. But when they do not mind their hearts, but look steadily to Christ and free grace, (a fancied Christ!) firmly believing that all he has done and suffered is for them, and realizing the matter to themselves, now they feel sweetly and joyfully; and therefore conclude that this is the way, the only way, to get good for our souls; and hence grow mighty enemies to the law....to self-examination....to sense of sin, &c. This is the door by which, if any man enters in, he will soon become an *Antinomian* and an *Enthusiast*. But, to proceed,

USE IV. *Of thankfulness.* While the law shews us what we are, it does, at the same time, make us sensible what we deserve ; while it discovers to us our sinfulness, it makes us feel our unworthiness of any good, and desert of all evil : and while we feel our unworthiness and ill deserts, our afflictions appear far less than we deserve, and our mercies appear more in number than the sands, and the kindness and bounty of our God appears exceedingly great, and we wonder at his goodness, and bless his holy name : And thus the law is of use to promote thankfulness.

God, the great Governor of the world, in testimony of his high displeasure against mankind for their apostacy from him, has spread miseries and calamities all round the earth : from the king upon the throne to the beggar on the dung-hill, there is not one but has a greater or lesser share in the troubles of life ; and many have their days filled up with sorrows. And now murmurings arise all round this guilty world, and the general cry is, "Nobody meets with such troubles as I do....I am very "hardly dealt with." But the law teaches us that God is holy in all these his ways, and righteous in all these his works ; and that we are all punished far less than we deserve ; and so our complaints are silenced, and our hearts quieted into humble submission, and it appears infinitely fit, a rebellious world should be full of woe, that we might learn that it is an evil and bitter thing to forsake the Lord.

But, at the same time, God, the great Lord of all, out of his boundless goodness through Jesus Christ, reprieves mankind from the *threatened* ruin....strews common mercies with a liberal hand all round the earth....sends rain and fruitful seasons, and fills the hearts of all, more or less, with food and gladness ; and to some he grants his special grace, makes them his children, and entitles them to eternal life : And thus *he is the Savior of all men, but especially of those that believe*....I. Tim. iv. 10. Yet this goodness of God is but little taken notice of in the world. But the law, while it discovers what we are, and how unworthy and hell-deserving we are, makes us sensible of the freeness

and riches of God's grace in these kindnesses: For, while we feel that hell is our proper due, every thing that renders our case better than that of the damned, we shall accept as a choice mercy, and as an effect of free grace; and so, instead of being always in a murmuring and repining disposition, we shall be always wondering at the goodness, admiring at the kindness of the Lord; saying, with good Jacob, *We are not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servants*....Gen. xxxii. 10—and with the Jewish Church, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good....for his mercy endureth forever*....Psalm cxxxvi. And we shall always find that the more sensible we are of our unworthiness and ill desert, the more cause we shall see for thankfulness, let our outward circumstances in this life be what they will. But,

Use V. In the last place, let all that has been said be improved, by way of *exhortation, to excite and engage the people of God more and more to renounce themselves, the world and sin, and give up themselves to God, to love him, and live to him, and delight in him, with all their hearts, forever.*

You have seen what grounds you have to do so, arising from God's infinite greatness, glory, and excellence; and you have been viewing your superadded obligations: And is the Lord such a God, and is he your God and Redeemer? O how strongly are you bound to keep all his commandments! And what is it, O believer, that the Lord thy God requireth of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul? And is there not, in keeping his commands, a great reward? Did you ever taste such sweetness as in a life of devotedness to God? And have not your wanderings from him cost you many a bitter and mournful hour? O, how happy would you be, if once you could come to it, to have done with every thing else, and to be wholly the Lord's! Seriously consider these things:

1. *That you can come to it, to have done with every thing else, and be wholly the Lord's, at least in a vastly greater degree than*

ever yet you have....See *Phil.* iii. 13, 14. You actually already have God *working in you to will and to do*....Phil. ii. 13. He has always been, as it were, laboring to humble you, and wean you from the world, and bring you nearer to himself, to love him, live to him, and delight in him, ever since the day you first came to know him, by the outward dispensations of his providence, and by the inward strivings of his spirit. He has always been *purging you, that you might bring forth more fruit*... John xv. 2: Yea, this was the very design of Christ's coming into the world, that he *might deliver you out of the hands of all your enemies, and bring you to serve God, without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of your life*....Luke i. 74—and that he *might redeem you from all iniquity, and purify you to himself, that you might be peculiarly his, and zealous of good works*....Tit. ii. 14: And, for this end, God has already taken, as it were, infinite pains with you, and this is what he is continually urging you unto, and he declares that he is *readier to give you his holy spirit, than earthly parents are to give bread to their children*, and invites, and encourages, and commands you *to ask* ....Mat. vii. 7, &c. And will you not now, therefore, arise, and put on the whole armour of God, and make your strongest efforts to recover from sin to God?

God, the great King of heaven and earth, commands you to do so—Jesus, the kind Mediator, invites you to do so—and the holy spirit, the Sanctifier, is ready to help you. Arise, therefore, and be of good courage, for the Lord is with you. Did you ever stir up yourself to seek after God in vain, or set about a life of greater seriousness, watchfulness, and prayer, and find no advantage by it? Or have you not always said, in the conclusion, that *it is good for me to draw near to God*....(Psalm lxxiii. 28,) and condemned and hated yourself for your former slackness, and been ready to resolve, from your inmost soul, that you would *call upon the Lord as long as you live?*....Psalm cxvi. 2.

And let me put it to your conscience, do not you believe, that, if now you would gird up the loins of your mind, and quit

yourself like a man, and be strong, that, *through Christ's strengthening of you, you may do all things?* And shall carelessness or stupidity....shall laziness and sloth....shall the allurements or the discouragements of the world or the devil, now, after all, hinder you? What! when you have been *redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God*—when your prison-door is flung open, and your chains knocked off, and you called and invited to come out into *the glorious liberty of the children of God*, and when God is actually striving with you already, and stands ready to afford you farther help, what, now be hindered! What, and be hindered by carelessness, unwatchfulness, &c! What, shall the Savior groan in the garden, and die on the cross, and yet you lie sleeping here! What, asleep! What, content without God in the world! What, when the whole army of prophets, apostles, and martyrs have fasted and prayed all their days, and waded through a sea of blood at last! Methinks you had better abandon every mortal delight, *lay aside every weight and the sin that more easily besets you*, and mourn, and weep, and watch, and pray, and fight, and strive, as long as you live, than act so far beneath the dignity and character of a *christian.*

It is but a few in the world that truly know God, and the way of access to him, through Jesus Christ, and are in a (spiritual) capacity to live a life of devotedness to God, and communion with him: most men are *dead in sin: But you hath he quickened*, and *you are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;* and it is God's design you should *walk in them:* you that were without Christ, and without God in the world, afar off, are *now brought nigh;* and you are no more *strangers and foreigners*, but *fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God:* for this cause I therefore beseech you, *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called:* See this argument enlarged upon in the second, third, and fourth chapters of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and your duties still more particularly delineated in the fifth and sixth.

2. Consider, *that as your case is circumstanced, it is absolutely impossible for you ever to find any other resting place but God, or ever take any satisfying comfort of your life, but in a way of devotedness to God and communion with him.* The case is not with you, O believer, as it is with other men.—*You, only, have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities*, said God to his ancient people....*Mic.* iii. 2. But the other nations of the earth might worship idols, and serve wood and stone, and go on and prosper, without being called to a present account; and so it is as to particular persons: Bastards, who have no parents to own them and bring them up, may, as for any restraints from parental authority, do what they will: They that do not belong to God's family, may live from home as long as they please, and, because they have no interest in his house, may, in respect of divine permission, go and live where they please....may continue to lie out from God: but *whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth*....Heb. xii. 6. Hypocrites may lose their religion, and lie dead whole months and years together, and return, with the dog to his vomit, and take as much comfort in the world and their lusts as ever; but it is impossible that you should: you can never get your conscience asleep as other men's are, or your heart content to lie out from God, or wring yourself out of your father's hand, or get out of the reach of his rod.

Solomon once seemed resolved to find another resting place for his heart besides God, and something else to take comfort in, and he was under the best outward advantages to make a thorough trial that ever man was; but he never did, and never could: but was always like a bone out of joint, or like the needle of a compass turned aside from its beloved star. *Vanity of vanities*, says the preacher, *all is vanity and vexation of spirit*: And poor David, how was he pained with anguish of spirit for the sin whereby he provoked the Lord? Psalm xxxii. 3, &c.... *While I kept silence*, (i. e. before Nathan came, who brought me to an open confession—see ver. 5.) *my bones waxed old through*

my roaring all the day long : For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me : My moisture is turned into the drought of summer : And never did a believer depart from God to seek another resting place, or go away from the fountain of living waters to get something else to take comfort in ; but God *hedged up his way with thorns, and made a wall, that he could not find his paths :* So that, although he *followed after his lovers, he never overtook them*—and though he *sought them, he never found them ;* but, at last, has been constrained to say, *I will go and return to my first husband ; for then was it better with me than now*..... Hos. ii. 6, 7. His *backslidings have reproved him*, and *his wickedness has corrected him*, and *made him know*, to the breaking of his heart, *that it is an evil and bitter thing to forsake the Lord* ....Jer. ii. 19 : For as God *thus* dealt with the Jewish church of old, so he does with every believer ; for all God's dealings with them *were for ensamples ; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*...I. Cor. x. 11.

And this now being the case, O believer, and you having always by your own experience found it so, will you, notwithstanding, forsake the Lord ? What fault....*what iniquity do you find* in God, that you should forsake him ? Has he been *a wilderness unto you, or a land of darkness ?* Or has he not been your father, ever since the day he took you by the hand to lead you, even ever since the day you first knew him ? Or are you weary of lightsome, of sweet and happy days, and impatient to plunge yourself into darkness, distress, and anguish ? May you not expect, if you forsake him and go away from him, to seek another resting place, and something else to take comfort in as your portion, that he will *strip you naked as in the day that you was born*, and make you desolate, and a terror to yourself, and that his anger will smoke against you, and his hand lie heavy upon you ? And then will you *mourn like the dove in the valley, and be troubled, and go bowed down greatly, and roar by reason of the disquietness of your heart*, and wish a thousand and thousand times that you had never forsaken the Lord....Read *Psalm* xxxviii.—*Jer.* 2d and 3d *Chapters*—and *Hos.* ii. Will you

not, therefore, bid adieu to all other lords and lovers, and cleave unto the Lord with all your heart forever? for this is your wisdom, and this is your life: Which brings me to add,

Consider, if you will have done with every thing else, and give up yourself to the Lord, to love him, and live to him, and be wholly his, *then God will be your God sensibly, and you will, in spiritual respects, be one of the happiest creatures in this world*—a hundred times happier than you could possibly be in the ways of sin; *you shall have an hundred fold in this present world, besides eternal life in the world to come. If any man love me*, says Christ, *and keep my commandments, I will love him and manifest myself unto him:* and *I and my father will come and make our abode with him*....John xiv. 21, 23. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty*....Psalm xci. 1: And God will be your *dwelling-place forever*....Psalm xc. 1. While the nations dash themselves in pieces, and all the world is in confusion, and while you pass through the fire and through the water, God will be with you—and he will always be your light, life, peace, joy, glory, and blessedness, in this undone, dreadful world—and your heart will be firm and fixed like *Mount Zion, that cannot be removed, but abideth forever*—and nothing shall ever *separate you from the love of God, neither things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor life, nor death, nor any other thing:* And God will certainly give you every thing in this world that is best for you, and most for his glory, and you will not desire any more; and all the evil things you may pass through will sensibly work together for your good....*Mat.* vi. 33—*Rom.* viii. 28—39—*Psalm* lxxiii. 25, 26.

And thus you have, by experience, always found that God has dealt with you. I appeal, O believer, to your own conscience, that thus it has always been, whenever you have sensibly from the heart renounced all other things, and given up yourself to the Lord, to love him, and to live to him, and to take content in him, God has sensibly been a *God*, and *father*, and *portion* unto you, and has given you all things, which (every

thing considered) you could desire, and sensibly made all things work together for your good ; whence you have been many a time ready to say, *That not a word of all his promises has ever fallen to the ground:* And you have actually enjoyed a hundred times more comfort in the service of God....in devotedness to God, and communion with him, than could have been had in the service of sin: And will you not now, therefore, be entirely and forever the Lord's ? O how happy you might be ! And what blessed days you might enjoy !

4. And that which cannot but touch a filial heart, consider, that if you will thus be wholly the Lord's, to love him, and live to him, and delight in him, and to do his will, *God will be glorified thereby....it will be to his honor in the world*....John xv. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people ; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*....I. Pet. ii. 9. God has but few friends in the world. Many that pretend to be his friends, are a great dishonor to him, and disgrace to religion : By their means his name is blasphemed, and his ways are evilly spoken of ; and, in general, his honor is every where trodden down in the dust. And can you stand by unconcerned ?...yea, can you look on without your heart bleeding within you ? O, therefore, be serious...be humble...be meek, holy, and heavenly...be peace-makers, and merciful...be kind and tender-hearted, condescending and obliging, and abound in every good work ; for you *are the salt of the earth*, and *the light of the world:* O, therefore, live so, *as that your Father, which is in heaven, may be glorified*....Mat. v. 13—16.

To conclude, will you not now, therefore, determine, from this day forward, to be wholly the Lord's, and from this day begin to live to God in better earnest than ever ? God is ready to help you. You will, as to present comfort, be undone, if you do not live to God ; and peace, and glory, and blessedness is before you, if you do ; and God, even your God, will be glorified : And if you are now ready, by the grace of

God, to hearken unto this advice, then take these two directions :—

1. *Lay aside every weight, and the sins which more easily beset you*....Heb. xii. 1. In a serious and sweet hour, when you get alone, and mourn, and pray, and give up yourself to God, and think and resolve you will now be forever the Lord's, you are wont, upon self-examination, and a review of past times, to see and say, "This, that, and the other thing, has been the sinful occasion, time after time, of my losing a serious, gracious "frame of heart—and by such and such sinful means I have "gradually lost a sense of divine and eternal things, and so have "wandered from God, and laid a foundation for darkness and "sorrow. O my carelessness! O that I had prayed more in "secret! O that I had spent precious time better, &c. &c."—These now are the weights, and these the sins which easily beset you—and these you must lay aside forever, if you design to be the Lord's indeed, and to make a business of religion to purpose : But perhaps you will say, "My worldly business....my "necessary cares, and the common duties of life, are sometimes "the very things, and these I ought not to lay aside ; and what "shall I do in this case ?"—I *answer*, that, at another time, the necessary cares, business, and duties of life, you find to be no hinderances at all—even at such times when you do all out of love to God, and for God, with singleness of heart. If you will, therefore, but always go about the common duties of life in such a manner, they will never be any clog to you. What you have, therefore, to do in the case, is not to lay aside that which is your duty, but to lay aside your wrong ends and aims : and thus you must lay aside every weight : But,

2. If you design to be religious in good earnest, *then be careful to use all proper means, and do every proper thing that has a tendency to promote your spiritual life:* Every *proper* thing, I say, to guard against those anti-scriptural methods which enthusiasts are wont to take, and by which, above all things, their false affections are promoted, but which have a direct tendency to kill the divine life. In a serious hour of sweet retirement,

and in happy days when you are nearest to God, and enjoy most communion with him, and have your senses most accurate to discern between good and evil, you are wont to see and say—"O how blessed I might be, if I did always keep in this narrow "way which now lies open plain before me—if I were always "serious, watchful, prayerful....always reading, or meditating, "and looking to God, and keeping my heart, and improving ev-"ery precious moment of my time wisely for God," &c.—Well, well, O believer, this is the way—walk in it, and you *shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, whose leaf never withers; and whatsoever* you *do shall prosper:* And, after a few more days, and weeks, and months, and years spent in prayer, and faith, and holiness, in this your pilgrimage state, you shall come and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and dwell forever with the Lord. Amen.

Now, the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory forever and ever. AMEN.

True Religion Delineated.

DISCOURSE II.

SHEWING THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL, AND OF A GENUINE COMPLIANCE WITH IT.

JOHN III. 16.

For GOD *so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE grand question before us, is, *What is true religion?* And this is the general answer—*It consists in a real conformity to the law, and in a genuine compliance with the gospel.* What is implied in a real conformity to the *law*, has been already shown in the former discourse ; and we come now to consider wherein a genuine compliance with the *gospel* does consist. From our Savior's mouth we had before a brief summary of the law ; and now, from our Savior's mouth, we have a brief summary of the gospel, in these comprehensive words, *God so loved the world*, &c.

Nicodemus came to him for instruction, believing him to be a teacher sent from God. Our Savior begins immediately to inculcate upon him the necessity of *regeneration* and *faith*.—We are sinners....are naturally *dead in sin*—and, therefore, must be *born again*....be recovered to the divine image in the temper of our minds, and so be made spiritually alive : We are guilty....we need pardoning mercy at the hands of the great Governor of the world ; but he will grant it only through the *Mediator* he has appointed : in him, therefore, must we believe—on his merits and mediation must we depend. Nicodemus

could hardly understand the doctrine of the *new birth ;* and our Savior intimates that the mysteries of our redemption, by the blood of Christ, were like to be still more difficult to him : We can easily understand worldly things, for they are agreeable to the temper of our minds, and suit the taste and relish of our hearts ; but we are blind to things spiritual and divine....are slow of heart to understand them, they not suiting the temper and relish of our hearts, and we being in a disposition to disrelish things of such a nature : therefore, our Savior observes to Nicodemus, (ver. 19.) *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* We are in a state of rebellion....at enmity against God, and under his wrath ; and yet ready, through our darkness, to flatter ourselves that all is well—and so are secure and at ease. Light is come into the world, discovering our disease and our remedy, but we love our disease, and loathe the remedy ; and, therefore, hate the light, and will not come to it : And thus our Savior teaches Nicodemus wherein true religion consists, and points out the aversion of mankind to it : Nor is there any thing that will discover our aversion so plainly as to set true religion in its own light ; for when we see clearly what it is, we may perceive how we stand affected towards it ; but otherwise we may be easily mistaken—may imagine that we love true religion, when, indeed, we only love the false image we have framed in our own fancy. *Regeneration* and *faith*, these two great essentials, wherein all religion radically consists, are the things our Savior inculcates upon his new disciple. Christ loved to lay the foundation well : He was not fond of converts, unless their conversion was sound : And, indeed, all our religion is good for nothing, if our nature be not renewed : and all our communion with God is but fancy, if we are strangers to Christ ; for he is *the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes to the Father but by him.* But to proceed to the words of the text, *God so loved the world,* &c.

God—i. e. God the Father, the first person in the ever-blessed trinity, who sustains the dignity and majesty of God-

head, and is eminently *Lord of heaven and earth*, (Mat. xi. 25.) and prime agent in the works of creation and providence....in governing the world....in redeeming, sanctifying, and saving of sinners....*Rom.* xi. 36. That there are three persons in the God-head....the Father, the Son, and the Holy-Ghost, and that these three are one God, the scriptures do abundantly teach.... (*Mat.* xxviii. 19—II. *Cor.* xiii. 13—I. *John* v. 7.) And this doctrine we must believe, or we cannot understand the gospel. *How* they are *three,* and *how* they are *one,* is not revealed, nor is it necessary for us to know: but that there are three persons in the God-head, and yet but one God, we must believe; and what characters they sustain, and what parts they act in the affair of our salvation, we must understand. The gospel represents *God the Father* as sovereign Lord of heaven and earth ....as righteous Governor of the world....as giving laws to his creatures....as revealing his wrath against all transgressions: He is represented as being injured and offended by our sins, and concerned to maintain the honor of his majesty....of his law and government, and sacred authority: He is represented as having designs of mercy towards a sinful, guilty, ruined world; and as contriving and proposing a method of recovery: He is represented as one seated on a throne of grace, reconcileable through Jesus Christ, and seeking to reconcile the world to himself by Christ, ordering pardon and peace to be proclaimed through a guilty world, to any and all who will return to him in the way prescribed. The gospel represents *God the Son* as being constituted Mediator by his Father, that, in and by him, he might open a way to accomplish his designs of mercy towards a guilty world, consistent with the honor of his majesty ....of his holiness and justice....of his law and government. His Father appoined him to the office, and he freely undertook it: His Father sent him into this world to enter upon the difficult work, and he willingly came. *He was made flesh, and dwelt among us:* Here he lived, and here he died, in the capacity of a Mediator. He arose....he ascended into heaven, and sits now at his Father's right hand, God-Man Mediator, exalt-

ed to the highest honor—made Lord of all things, and Judge of the world. And now we are to have access to God by him, as our Mediator, high Priest, Intercessor, and Advocate, who has made complete atonement for sins in the days of his abasement, and has now sufficient interest in the court of heaven. The gospel represents *God the Holy-Ghost* as being sent of the Father as prime agent, and by the Son as Mediator, in the character of an enlightener and sanctifier, in order to bring sinners effectually to see and be sensible of their sin, guilt, and ruin....to believe the gospel....to trust in Christ, and to return home to God through him : And it is his office to dwell in believers....to teach and lead them....to sanctify, quicken, strengthen, and comfort them, and to keep them through faith unto salvation. The *Father* is God by nature, and God by office : The *Son* is God by nature, and Mediator by office : The *Spirit* is God by nature, and Sanctifier by office. The *Father*, as Governor, Law-giver, Judge, and Avenger, has all power in heaven and earth, in and of himself....*Mat.* xi. 25. The *Son*, as Mediator, derives all his authority from the Father....*Mat.* xi. 27. The *Holy Spirit* acts as being sent by them both.... by the *Father*, as supreme Governor, dealing with a sinful, guilty world, through a Mediator—by the *Son*, as Mediator, negociating a reconciliation between God and man....*John* xiv. 16. The *Father* maintains the honor of the God-head, and of his government, and displays his grace, while he ordains that sin shall be punished, the sinner humbled, and brought back to God, and into a subjection to his will, and in that way be pardoned, and finally saved. Sin is punished, in the *Son*, as Mediator, standing in the room of the guilty : And the sinner is humbled, brought back to God, and into a subjection to his will, by the *Holy Spirit ;* and, in this way, is pardoned and saved : And thus the *Son* and the *Spirit* honor the *Father*, as supreme Governor, and all join in the same design to discountenance sin, humble the sinner, and glorify grace.—Thus far briefly of the doctrine of the trinity. Right apprehensions of God help us to understand the law, and right apprehensions of

the trinity, will help us to understand the gospel: Not how they are three persons, and yet but one God, the manner of which is not needful to be known; but the offices and characters they sustain, and the different parts they act in the great affair of saving sinners. *God* (says the text) *so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life:* i. e. God the Father, the great Governor of the world, whom we had offended by sin,

So LOVED *the world*—i. e. with a love of benevolence. Esteem us he could not; for we were worthless and vile: To delight in us it was impossible; for we were altogether odious and abominable. But to have a good will towards us, or a will to do us good, this he might have, although we were sinful and guilty: Not, indeed, from any motive in us; for if we were viewed, and our temper and circumstances considered, there was not to be seen one motive to pity, no, not the least; but every motive to indignation and wrath. However, from motives within himself, he might will to do us good, notwithstanding our sin and guilt. The self-moving goodness of his nature did excite him, from the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, to design mercy towards a sinful, guilty, ruined world. *God so loved the world.*

The WORLD—i. e. all mankind....all the posterity of Adam: For what follows, is evidently true, of every individual;—*That he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

So *loved*—i. e. so inconceivably....so unspeakably,

That he GAVE *his only begotten Son*—i. e. of his mere, pure goodness, constituted him to be a Mediator....appointed him to be a Redeemer and Savior, to make atonement for sin, and purchase divine favors, and so to open a way for sinners to return to God with safety, and for God to show mercy to them with honor. *God so loved the world*, i. e. all the race of Adam, that he *gave* his only begotten Son, immediately upon the apostacy of mankind; for then was *this seed of the woman* promised, (*Gen.* iii. 15) that all, being, *by nature, children of wrath*, might

be prevented by divine goodness. God saw *all* involved in sin, and guilt, and ruin, by Adam's first sin: And so he provided a Savior for *all*; that *whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Should not PERISH.—He viewed all mankind as sinful and guilty....lost, undone, and perishing, i. e. exposed to the wrath of God, and curse of the law....to all the miseries of this life....to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever: And he gave his only begotten Son to be a Savior;

That whosoever BELIEVETH *in him*—i. e. that ventures upon his atonement....his worth and merits....his mediation and intercession, for divine acceptance; so as to be thence emboldened to return home to God, upon the invitation of the gospel. That all such should not perish—but

Have EVERLASTING LIFE—i. e. the everlasting in-dwelling of the holy spirit, as a sanctifier and comforter, to be a never-failing spring of a new, a spiritual and divine life—everlasting union and communion with Christ, and the everlasting favor and enjoyment of God through him.

Thus we have, in these words, a brief view of the glorious *gospel* of the blessed God. And from them we may learn, (1.) That God, the great Governor of the world, considered mankind as being in a *perishing* condition, i. e. sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone. (2.) That it was merely from *motives within himself*, that he has done what he has for their recovery out of this state. (3.) That he has constituted his *Son* a Mediator, Redeemer, and Savior, that through him sinners might be *saved.* (4.) That he has appointed *faith* in Christ, to be the condition of salvation. Here, therefore, I will endeavor to show,

I. Upon what *grounds* it was, that God, the great Governor of the world, did consider mankind as being in a *perishing* condition, i. e. sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone.

II. What were the *motives* which excited him to do what he has done for their *recovery.*

III. What *necessity* there was of a *Mediator* and *Redeemer*, and how the way to life has been opened by him whom God has provided.

IV. What is the true nature of saving *faith* in him: And so, by the whole, to explain the nature of the gospel, and of a genuine compliance therewith: And in the last place,

V. Will consider the *promise* of everlasting life to those who believe.

SECTION I.

SHOWING THE REASONS WHY GOD DOES, IN THE GOSPEL, CONSIDER MANKIND AS BEING IN A PERISHING CONDITION.

I. I am to show *upon what grounds it was, that God, the great Governor of the world, did consider mankind as being in a* perishing *condition*, i. e. sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone. That he did consider mankind as being in a perishing condition, is evident, because he gave his only begotten Son, that *they might not perish* who should believe in him. If we were not in a perishing condition, his giving his Son to save us from perdition, had been needless: and his pretending great love and kindness in doing so, had been to affront us—to make as if we were undone creatures, when we were not; and as if we were much beholden to him for his goodness, when we could have done well enough without it: And the more he pretends of his great love and kindness, the greater must the affront be. So that, however we look upon ourselves, it is certain that God, who sees all things as being what they are, did actually look upon us as in a perishing, lost, undone condition: And if he considered us as being in such a condition, it must have been because he looked upon us as sinful, guilty, justly condemned, and altogether helpless; for otherwise we were not in a perishing condition. If we could have helped ourselves a little, we should not have needed one to save us, but only to help us to save ourselves: but our salvation, in scripture, is always attributed wholly to God; and God every where takes all the glory to himself, as though, in very deed, he had deserved it all....(*Eph.* i. 3—6, and ii. 1

—9); so that it is certain, God did look upon mankind as being in a perishing condition, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, and altogether helpless: and, considering us in such a condition, he entered upon his designs of mercy and grace; and therefore he every where magnifies his love, and looks upon us as infinitely beholden to him, and under infinite obligations to ascribe to him all the glory and praise, even quite all: *That no flesh should glory in his presence*—but *he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*....I. Cor. i. 29, 31.

It is of great importance, therefore, that we come to look upon ourselves as being in such a perishing condition too; for otherwise it is impossible we should ever be in a disposition thankfully to accept gospel-grace, as it is offered unto us. We shall rather be offended, as thinking the gospel casts reproach upon human nature, in supposing us to be in such a forlorn condition as to stand in a perishing need of having so much done for us;—as the Jews of old scorned it, when Christ told them, *If they would become his disciples, they should know the truth, and the truth should make them free.* They took it as an affront, and were ready to say, "What! Just as if we were in bon-"dage! Indeed, no. We were never in bondage to any man: "We have Abraham to our father, and God is our Father; but "thou hast a devil"....*John* viii. 31—48. They would not understand him....they were all in a rage: And so it is like to be with us, with regard to the methods which God has taken with us in the gospel, unless we look upon ourselves as he does ....so wretched and miserable....so poor, blind, and naked....so helpless, lost, and undone. It is the want of this self-acquaintance, together with a fond notion of our being in a much better case than we are, that raises such a mighty cry against the doctrines of grace, through a proud, impenitent, guilty world.

And since God does thus look upon us to be in such a perishing condition, and upon this supposition enters on his designs of mercy and grace, here now, therefore, does the question recur, *Upon what grounds is it that he considers us as being in such a perishing condition?*....Grounds he must have, and good grounds

too, or he would never thus look upon us. If we may rightly understand what they are, perhaps we may come to look upon ourselves as he does ; and then the grace of the gospel will begin to appear to us in the same light it does to him.—The grounds, then, are as follow :

1. God, the great Governor of the world, does, in the gospel, consider mankind *as being guilty of Adam's first sin*, and, on that account, to be in a perishing condition. *In Adam all died*, (I. Cor. xv. 22) ; but *death is the wages of sin*, (Rom. vi. 23) : therefore, in Adam all sinned ; for *by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*, i. e. sinned in Adam....(Rom. v. 12) ; for (ver. 19.) *by one man's disobedience many were made sinners :* And, accordingly, *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation :* and hence all are, *by nature, children of wrath*...,(Eph. ii. 3.)

Obj. *But how can we be guilty of Adam's first sin ? It was he committed it, and not we : and that without our consent, and a long time before we were born.*

Ans. Adam, by divine appointment, stood and acted as our public head : He stood a representative in the room of all his posterity ; and, accordingly, acted not only for himself, but for them. His sustaining this character rendered him a type of Christ, the *second Adam*, who has laid down his life in the room and stead of sinners : And his being spoken of in scripture as a type of Christ, with respect to this character of a public head, proves that he did actually sustain such a character....(Rom v. 14) : And, therefore, as, by the obedience of *Christ*, many are made righteous ; so, by the disobedience of Adam, many are made sinners—(ver 19,) i. e. by the imputation of Christ's obedience, believers become legally righteous—righteous in the sight of God, by virtue of an established constitution ; and so have the reward of eternal life : So, by the imputation of Adam's first sin, his posterity, by ordinary generation, became legally sinners—sinners in the sight of God, by virtue of an established constitution, and so are exposed to the punishment of

eternal death, the proper wages of sin. Now, it is true, we did not PERSONALLY rise in rebellion against God in that first transgression, but he who did do it was *our* representative.—We are members of the community he acted for, and God considers us as such; and, therefore, looks upon us as being legally guilty, and liable to be dealt with accordingly—and so, on this account, in a perishing condition: But, perhaps, some will still be ready to say, "And where is the justice of all this?" Methinks the following considerations, if we will be disinterestedly impartial, may set the matter in a satisfying light:

(1.) *That the original constitution made with Adam, as to himself personally considered, was holy, just, and good.*

(2.) *That if all his posterity had been put under the same constitution, one by one, from age to age, as they came into being, to act for themselves, it had also been holy, just, and good.*

(3.) *That it was, in the nature of the thing, in all respects, as well for our interest, that Adam should be made our public head and representative, to act not only for himself, but for all his posterity, as that we should each stand and act for himself singly; and, in some respects, better.*

(4.) *That, in such a case, God, as supreme Lord and sovereign Governor of the whole world, had full power and rightful authority to constitute Adam our common head and public representative, to act in our behalf.*—Let us, therefore, distinctly consider these particulars:

(1.) It is to be noted, *the original constitution made with Adam*, (Gen. ii. 17.) *as to himself personally considered, was holy, just, and good*, as will appear if we consider the circumstances he was under, antecedent to that constitution or covenant: For,

In the first place, antecedent to that covenant-transaction, he was under infinite obligations, from the reason and nature of things, to love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing. From the infinite excellence and beauty of the divine nature, and from God's original, entire right to him, as his creature, and absolute authority over him, as his subject, did his infinite obligation so to do necessarily arise. It was fit....it was

infinitely fit and right that he should look upon the infinitely glorious God, his Maker and Governor, as being what he was, and as having such a right to him, and authority over him, as he had, and that he should be *affected* and *act accordingly*, antecedent to the consideration of any covenant-transaction : And, no doubt, this was actually the case with him before that covenant was made ; for he was created in *the image of God*, (Gen. i. 27.) And so his heart was full of a sense of his glory, and of admiring and adoring thoughts : He felt that he was not his own, but the Lord's—and he loved him, and was entirely devoted to him, in the temper of his mind, conscious of the infinite obligations he was under thereto. And farther, it is certain that God was the sole Lord and owner of this lower world, and all things in it ; and that Adam had no right to any thing but by a divine grant : And it is certain it was fit that Adam should be put into a *state of trial*, and that God had authority to do it.

And now, since he was naturally under such infinite obligations to love and obey God, his Maker....God, the supreme Lord and sovereign Governor of all things—since he had no right to any of the trees of the garden, but by the free grant of God ; and since it was fit he should be put into a state of trial, and God had authority to do it : since these things were so, it is evident that constitution was HOLY—*In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* God had a right to make such a law, for Adam was his, and all the trees in the garden were his, and he was, by nature, GOD, SUPREME LORD AND SOVEREIGN GOVERNOR of the whole world, and it was fitting he should act as such—and it was infinitely fit that Adam should have a sacred regard to his authority in all things, *because he was such*—and that his eternal welfare should lie at stake, and be suspended upon his good behavior : And, no doubt, Adam viewed things thus, and was thoroughly sensible that God had a right to prohibit that tree upon pain of death, and that he was under infinite obligations to have a most sacred regard to his will in that matter.—Thus that constitution was *holy*.

And if we consider, *in the next place*, that, as has been observed, Adam was under infinite obligations to love God, his Maker, with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, resulting from the very reason and nature of things, it will appear that the *threatening was just ;* and no more than what he must have expected, had he fallen into any sin whatsoever, antecedent to any constitution at all. Adam, in a state of *pure nature*, i. e. *prior to any covenant-transaction*, was under infinite obligations to perfect love and perfect obedience ; the least defect, therefore, must have been infinitely sinful ; and so, by consequence, must have deserved an infinite punishment: And it was meet that God, the Governor of the world, should punish sin according to its real desert: in the nature of things it was meet, antecedent to any express declaration of his design to do so ; and Adam knew all this : He knew what obligations he was under to God, to love him with all his heart, and obey him in every thing ; and, by consequence, he was conscious to himself that the least defect would be an infinite evil, and so would deserve an infinite punishment ; and he knew that it was the *nature of God* to render to every one according to his deserts : he was certain, therefore, from the reason and nature of things, antecedent to that threatening, that the least sin would expose him to an infinite punishment. From this view of the case, it is plain, that *that threatening was just*, and Adam did most perfectly approve of it as such. It was no more than it was reasonable for Adam to expect, and meet for God to inflict, for any transgression of the law of nature : And it was against the law of nature for Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, when once God had said he should not. It was practically denying God's supremacy.....casting off his authority, and actually setting up his will against the Lord's. If any sin, therefore, deserved an infinite punishment, surely that did.

Remark. And here, by the way, from this view of the case, we may gain a certain knowledge of what God meant by *Thou shalt surely die ;* or, as it is in the original, *In dying thou shalt die ;* and may be certain how Adam understood it. He did

not mean that Adam should be *annihilated;* for such a punishment was not equal to the crime: He might, without injustice, have *annihilated* Adam, had he remained innocent; for he that gives Being, of his mere good pleasure, may, of his mere good pleasure, take it away again: nor could Adam have brought God into debt by a thousand years' perfect obedience; for he owed himself, and all he could do, to God his Maker....*Rom.* xi. 35. God meant to punish Adam according to his deserts; but *annihilation* would not have been such a punishment: and therefore it is certain that this was not what God meant. Adam knew that sin was an infinite evil, and so deserved an infinite punishment, and that it was meet it should be punished according to its deserts, and that it was the nature of God to do so; but *annihilation* was not such a punishment, and Adam could not but know it: and therefore Adam could not understand *death* in this sense. God meant to punish Adam according to his deserts. And what did he deserve? Why, an infinite punishment; i. e. to have all good taken away, and all kinds of evil come upon him *forever.* Well, what good had Adam in possession? Why, he had a *natural life*, resulting from the union of his soul and body, with all the delights and sweetnesses thereof; and he had a *spiritual life*, resulting from the gracious influences of the holy spirit, and consisting of the image of God, and sense of his love, with all the delights and sweetnesses thereof; and he was formed for immortality, and so was in a capacity of *eternal life* and blessedness, in glorifying God, and enjoying him: Here, therefore, he was capable of a *natural*, a *spiritual*, and an *eternal death*—to have soul and body rent asunder forever—to be forsaken by the spirit of God, and given up to the power of sin and satan forever, and to have God Almighty become his everlasting enemy. *All this* he deserved; and therefore God meant *all this:* All this he *knew* he should deserve; and therefore he could not but *understand* the threatening to comprehend all this. Besides, that which makes it still more certain, that this was the meaning of that first threatening, is, that God has since very expressly threatened *eternal*

death as the wages of the least sin....*Rom.* i. 18—*Gal.* iii. 10—*Mat.* xxv. 46 ; (and the word DEATH itself is plainly used to signify *eternal death* and misery....*Rom.* vi. 23—*Rom.* viii. 13): So that either *now* he means to punish sin more than it deserves, or he intended *then* to punish sin less than it deserved; or else *eternal death* was what he always meant, by threatening *death* as the wages of sin. If he means to punish sin *now* more than he did *then*, it is too much *now*, or not enough *then;* both which are equally contrary to the reason and nature of things, and equally inconsistent with the impartial justice of the divine nature, which always inclines him to render to every one according to his deserts....nor more, nor less: and therefore *eternal death* was intended in that first threatening: But this by the way.

And, *lastly*, as that constitution was holy and just, so also it was *good;* because it put Adam (personally considered) under better circumstances than he was before : For, while in a state of pure nature, perfect obedience could not have given him any title to eternal life ; but, as was said before, God might have annihilated him at pleasure, after a hundred, or a thousand, or ten thousand years, without any injustice to him....(*Job* xxii. 2—*Rom.* xi. 35.) But now, under this constitution, he had an assurance of eternal life upon perfect obedience: For, inasmuch as God threatened *death* in case he should sin, it is evidently implied that he should have *lived forever* in case he had been obedient : So that there was infinite goodness manifested to Adam (personally considered) in this constitution—eternal life being thus promised, of mere unmerited bounty. And besides, after a while, his state of trial would have been at an end, and he confirmed in an immutable state of holiness and happiness ; of which confirmation *the tree of life* seems to have been designed as a *sacramental sign*....Gen. iii. 22—Rev. ii. 7, and xxii. 14 : Whereas, had he remained in a state of pure nature, he must have been everlastingly in a state of probation, had it pleased his Maker to have continued him in being : So that, upon the whole, it is plain, this constitution, as to Adam, per-

sonally considered, was *holy*, *just*, and *good;* and Adam had great reason, with all his heart, to give thanks to God his Maker, for his goodness and condescension, that he would be so kind, and stoop so low, as to enter into such a covenant with a worm of the dust: and, no doubt, he did so, with the sincerest gratitude. We proceed, therefore, to consider,

(2.) *That if all his posterity had been put under this same constitution, one by one, from age to age, as they came into being, to act singly for themselves, it had also, as to them, been* HOLY, JUST, *and* GOOD: As it was better for Adam than a state of pure nature, so it would have been, for the same reason, better for us. We (had we remained in a state of pure nature, i. e. without any constitution at all) should have been, each one of us, under the same infinite obligation to perfect obedience to the law of nature, and equally exposed to the same infinite punishment for the least sin, as he was, and as much without a title to life upon perfect obedience, and as liable to be everlastingly in a state of probation: And, therefore, such a constitution would have been as great a favor to us, as it was to him; and we equally under obligations to gratitude and thankfulness to God therefor. But,

(3.) *It was as well for our interest, in the nature of the thing, in all respects, that Adam should be made a public head and representative, to act not only for himself, but for all his posterity, as if we had been put to act singly for ourselves; and, in some respects, better:* For Adam was, in the nature of the thing, in all respects, *as likely* to stand as any of us should have been, and, in some respects, *more likely;* for he had as good natural powers—as much of the image of God, and as great a sense of his obligations, as any of us should have had; and had, in all respects, as many motives to watchfulness; and, in some respects, more—in that not only his own everlasting welfare lay at stake, but also the everlasting welfare of all his posterity too. Besides, he had just received the law from God's own mouth, and he was in a state of perfect manhood when his trial began: So that, upon the whole, in the nature of the thing, it was more likely he

should stand than that any of us should; and, therefore, it was more for our interest that he should act for us, than we for ourselves: But if we had been put to act singly for ourselves, under such a constitution, it had been much better than to be left in a state of pure nature, and so we should have had great cause of thankfulness to God for his condescension and goodness; but to have Adam appointed to act for us, was, in the nature of the thing, *still more to our advantage;* on the account of which, we have, therefore, *still greater cause* of thankfulness to the good Governor of the world. It is infinite wickedness, therefore, to fly in the face of Almighty God, and charge him with unrighteousness, for appointing Adam our head and representative. We ought rather to say, "The constitution was "holy, just, and good—yea, very good; but to us belongs "shame and confusion of face, for that we have sinned."

OBJ. *But God knew how it would turn out—he knew Adam would fall, and undo himself and all his race.*

ANS. When God called Abraham, and chose him and his seed for his peculiar people, to give them distinguishing advantages and privileges, and that professedly under the notion of great kindness and unspeakable goodness; yet, at the same time, he *knew* how they would turn out—how they would be a stiff-necked people, and would kill his Prophets, his Son and Apostles, and so be cast off from being his people. *He knew all this beforehand;* yet that altered not the nature of the thing at all—did not diminish his goodness, nor lessen his grace. And the Jewish nation, at this day, have reason to say, "The "Lord's ways have been ways of goodness, and blessed be his "name; but to us belong shame and confusion of face, for "that we have sinned."

OBJ. *Yes, but God decreed that Adam should fall.*

ANS. He did not decree that Adam should fall, any more than he did that the seed of Abraham should turn out such a stiff-necked, rebellious race. He decreed to permit both to do as they did; but this neither lessens his goodness, nor their sin: for God is not obliged to put his creatures under such cir-

cumstances as that they shall never be tempted nor tried; and when they are tried, he is not obliged to keep them from falling; it is enough that they have sufficient power to stand, if they will;—which was the case with Adam. Besides, God had wise ends in permitting Adam to fall; for he designed to take occasion therefrom, to display all his glorious perfections in the most illustrious manner: So that we may say of it (and should, if we loved God above ourselves) as Joseph does of his brethren's selling him—*Ye meant it for evil, but the Lord meant it for good:* So here, satan meant it for evil, but God meant it for good; even to bring much glory to his great name: therefore be still, and adore his holy sovereignty—and, at the same time, acknowledge that the constitution, in its own nature, was holy, just, and good—yea, very good. These things being considered, I proceed to add,

(4.) *That, in such a case, God, as supreme Lord and sovereign Governor of the whole world, had full power and rightful authority to constitute Adam, our common head and public representative, to act in our behalf;* for, as the case stood, there could be no reasonable objection against it. Adam was not held up to hard terms: The threatening, in case of disobedience, was strictly just: The constitution, in its own nature, was vastly for the interest of Adam and of all his race. Adam was already constituted the *natural* head of all mankind; for *God blessed him, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth....* Gen. i. 28. All his race, had they then existed, would, if they had been wise for themselves, readily have consented to such a constitution, as being well adapted to the general good: (So men are wont to do when their estates lie at stake, or their lives; if they think that an *attorney* is likely to manage the case for them better than they can for themselves, they will choose him, and venture the case with him, rather than with themselves): So that the only question is, whether God had, in so unexceptionable a case, full power and rightful authority to constitute Adam a public head, to stand as a *moral* representative for all his race, and act in their behalf, so that they should stand or fall

with him : Or, in other words, (for it all comes to the same thing), whether, in any case whatsoever, God has full power and rightful authority to appoint one to stand and act in the room of another, so as to lay a foundation for the conduct of the one to be so imputed to the other, as that both shall stand and fall together : And so it is as much of a question, whether God had power and authority to constitute the *second* Adam a public head as the *first*. If God had not full power and rightful authority to appoint the *first* Adam to be our public head and moral representative, to stand and act in our behalf, so as to lay a foundation for his conduct to be so imputed to us, as that we should stand and fall with him, *then* he had not full power and rightful authority to appoint the *second* Adam to be a public head, and moral representative, to stand and act in the room of a guilty world, so as to lay a foundation for his righteousness to be so imputed to them that believe in him, as that they should be justified and saved through it : For, if God has not power to constitute one to stand and act in the room of another, *in any case whatsoever*—and if, on this footing, we say he had not power to appoint the *first* Adam, it is plain that, on the same footing, he had no power to appoint the *second*. I suppose it will be readily granted, that if God has power, in any case whatsoever, to constitute one to stand and act in the room of another, in the manner aforesaid, then he had in these two instances of Adam and Christ, which are doubtless, on all accounts, in themselves, most unexceptionable : But if God, in no case whatsoever, has power to appoint one thus to stand and act in the room of another, then both these constitutions are effectually undermined, and rendered null and void. We can neither be guilty of Adam's first sin, so as justly to be exposed to condemnation and ruin therefor ; nor can the righteousness of Christ be so imputed to us, as to entitle us to justification and life. One man's disobedience cannot *constitute* many to be sinners, nor the obedience of one *constitute* many to be righteous. We can neither be ruined by the *first* Adam, nor redeemed by the *second*. Under the Jewish dispensation, it was ordained (*Lev.* xvi.) that *Aaron*

should lay both his hands upon the head of the live-goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness : And (says God) *the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities, unto a land not inhabited.* We used to think this *scape-goat* was designed by God to typify Christ : And the scripture has taught us, in express language, that *the iniquities of us all were laid on him*....that *he bore our sins*....that *he was made a curse for us*....that *by his obedience many are made righteous*....Isai. liii. 6—Pet. ii. 24—Gal. iii. 13—Rom. v. 19.—But if God has not authority to constitute one to stand and act in the room of another, this must all be void and of none effect : And thus, while men are disputing against the original constitution with Adam, they, unawares, undermine this second constitution, which is the foundation of all our hopes. Eager to avoid Adam's first sin, whereby comes condemnation, they render of none effect Christ's righteousness, whereby comes justification : And if Christ did not stand and act as a public person....if our sins were not laid upon him....if he did not bare them on the tree....if he was not made a curse for us, and if we are not to be pardoned through his atonement, and justified through his righteousness, then the gospel is all a fable, and the whole scheme of our salvation, therein revealed, is wholly overthrown : What remains, therefore, but deism and infidelity ? But in as much as we have full evidence to the truth of the Christian revelation, and may be assured that it is from God, we may, therefore, be confirmed in it that Jesus Christ has been, by God, the great Governor of the world, appointed a public person, to stand and act....to obey and suffer in our room, that, through his obedience and sufferings, we might have pardon and eternal life : And, from this fact, we may be assured, that God has full power and rightful authority to constitute one to stand and act in the room of another : and, if he has such authority, nothing hinders but that he might constitute Adam to be our public head, as has been said.

Besides, if we consider the nature of the thing itself, it is plain that God had power to constitute Adam our public head; for God, as moral Governor of the world, and sovereign Lord of all things, has power to make any constitution whatsoever, which does, in its own nature, agree to the eternal fitness of things, or, in other words, which is agreeable to his own perfections: But all will grant, that constitution is agreeable to his own perfections, which, in its own nature, is suited to the glory of God and good of the creatures. Now this constitution with Adam was, in its own nature, suited to the general good of mankind, because the welfare of mankind was, in the nature of the thing, safer and better secured upon such a footing, than if every single child of Adam had been left in a state of pure nature, without any constitution at all, or than if they had every one been put to act singly for himself—as has been before proved: And it was well suited to the glory of God, because in that constitution, considered in its own nature, God eminently appeared to be what he was: For in it he appeared as the MOST HIGH GOD—the SUPREME LORD, and SOVEREIGN GOVERNOR of the whole world—for in it he acted as *sovereign Lord* of his creatures...as being, by *nature*, *God*, and as having an *absolute right to* and *authority over* the works of his hands. And when God acts so, as by his conduct to show what he is, then are his doings suited to his own glory; for nothing is more to his glory, than to appear to be what he is: And in as much as the constitution itself was well suited to the general good of mankind, God did, in making of it, act a kind and tender part towards the human race, to the honor and glory of his goodness. And while eternal life was promised to perfect obedience, and eternal death threatened to disobedience, God's infinite love to virtue, and infinite hatred of vice, were manifested, to the glory of his holiness and justice. Since, then, that constitution was thus, in its own nature, suited to our good and God's glory, there is no doubt but the sovereign Lord and Governor of all things had full power and rightful authority so to appoint: for, in so doing, he would act agreeably to his own perfections, and the eternal fitness of things.

BUT TO CONCLUDE—We may be abundantly satisfied, not only from the nature of the thing, but also from *what God has in fact done*, that that constitution was holy, just, and good, and that he had full power, and rightful authority to do as he did, because otherwise he would never have done so—he would never have made such a constitution. It is plain and evident, from *facts*, that Adam was considered and dealt with under the capacity of a public head, and that death *natural*, *spiritual*, and *eternal*, were included in the threatening; for all his posterity are evidently dealt with *just as if that had been the case.* They are born *spiritually dead*, as has been proved in the former discourse. They are evidently liable to *natural death*, as soon as they are born: And if they die and go into eternity with their native temper, they must necessarily be miserable in being what they are, unlike to God, and incapable of the enjoyment of him, and contrary to him: And God must necessarily look upon them with everlasting abhorrence; for he cannot but abhor creatures whose tempers are contrary to him: so that here is *eternal death;* and all in consequence of Adam's first sin.

Now then, if indeed we are, in *fact*, dealt with just as we should have been, had Adam been our public head, there can surely need no farther evidence to prove that this was the case; for *the Judge of all the earth cannot but do right:* and, therefore, he would not deal with us as being guilty of Adam's first sin, were not Adam our representative: But had Adam been our representative, and his first sin imputed to us, yet *then* we should have been dealt with no otherwise than *now* we are; i. e. on supposition of the interposition of a Mediator, as is now the case: for that we are now born into the world subject to *natural death*, none can deny, and this by virtue of Adam's first sin; and if we are really *spiritually dead* too, and so exposed to *eternal death,* it is just what might have been expected, had Adam stood for us—and so there is no more to be said: And if God be such a Being, as I suppose he is, and the law such, and the nature of true holiness such, then, as has been shown in the *first discourse*, there is no doubt we are, natively, *spiritually*

dead: So that the force of this argument depends upon the truth of those *first principles*, which, I think, have been sufficiently proved. Right apprehensions of the *moral law* will, at once, convince us of our inherent natural corruption, and make us feel that we are *fallen* creatures.

REMARK. Perhaps this is the consideration which most commonly first leads poor sinners to see that they do actually lie under the guilt of Adam's first sin; and that their ruin thence took its rise, viz. their finding, by experience, when the spirit of God brings home the law and awakens conscience, that they are, *by nature, dead in trespasses and sins;* for now no conclusion can be more natural than that they are, *by nature, children of wrath:* And this will naturally lead them to enquire, Whence this has come to pass? and they will presently find the scripture express and plain in it, that, *by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners;* and, *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation:* and their own experience will give them the most natural comment upon the words, while they feel themselves to be, by nature, dead in sin, and exposed to eternal ruin: But now, "How could I justly have all this come "upon me for Adam's first sin?" will naturally be the next thought: And an awakened conscience will, perhaps first of all, reply, "How it is just and right I cannot tell, but I am certain "so it is, that I am, by nature, dead in sin, and, by nature, a "child of wrath;—this I see and feel: And the scripture says, "that, *by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners;* and "that, *for the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to con-* "*demnation:* And God's ways must be righteous, for the Judge "of all the earth always does right: And if I do finally perish, "I have nothing to say; for I have gone in Adam's steps....I "have been voluntary in my rebellion against God all my life, "and am at heart an enemy to him still, and that voluntarily so." And this may, in a measure, silence such a poor sinner for the present: But if ever he comes to be reconciled to the divine nature, and then impartially to look into the original constitution, he may then see that it was, in its own nature, holy, just,

and good, and worthy of God, the great Governor of the world; and, as such, sweetly acquiesce in it, saying, "God's ways were "holy, just, and good, and blessed be his name; but to us (to "all the human race) belong shame and confusion of face, for "that we have sinned." But until men are awakened, at least to some sense of their natural corruption, they are commonly very blind and deaf to all the scripture says about this matter. It is hard to make men believe contrary to their own experience—to make them believe that they *fell* in Adam, when they do not feel that they are, by nature, *fallen* creatures. Let the scripture speak ever so plain, yet they cannot believe that it means as it says: It must mean, they think, something else. The best method, therefore, to convince sinners of the doctrine of original (imputed) sin, and to silence all their cavils, is to open the true meaning of the *moral law*, and show them their native depravity: This is the method which God takes in the Bible. He says but little about Adam's first sin, but says much to show us what we really are, as knowing that, if we are but once convinced of our native corruption, a few words are sufficient to show us whence our ruin originally took its rise.

Thus God, the great Governor of the world, in the gospel-dispensation, considered mankind as being in a perishing condition....sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone; and one ground and reason of his looking upon mankind to be in such a condition, was our original apostacy from him in our first parents: And since that constitution, whereby Adam was made our common head and public representative, was holy, just, and good, in its own nature; and since God, the supreme Lord of all things, had full power and rightful authority so to ordain and appoint—hence, therefore, he has sufficient reason to look upon mankind, on account of this first apostacy, as he does.

Therefore, at the same time he provided a Savior for Adam, at the same time did he also provide a Savior for his posterity too; they being considered as one with him, and involved in the same sin, and guilt, and ruin; and so standing in equal need of relief: Hence Christ is called *the lamb slain from the foun-*

dation of the world. Then was it said, that *the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head :* To which original grant our Savior seems to have respect, when he says, *God so loved the world, that he* GAVE *his only begotten Son*, &c. Whereas, had Adam acted in the capacity of a private person, and sinned and fallen for himself alone, and his posterity not been involved in the same ruin, he might have had a Savior provided for him : But his posterity would no more have needed one than the angels in heaven, or than Adam before his fall.

OBJ. *But those words*, In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, (Gen. ii. 17) *were evidently spoken only to Adam ; nor is there a word said about his posterity having any interest or concern in the affair.*

ANS. So also were those words, in Gen. iii. 19....*Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*, spoken only to Adam, without the least intimation that his posterity were any of them included in the sentence : And yet, by virtue of that sentence, all his posterity are subject to death....*Rom.* v. 12, 13, 14 : Do you account for this, and you will, at the same time, account for that ; for the truth is, that, in both cases, Adam was considered not merely as a single private person, but as a public head and representative, standing in the room of all his posterity : and, considered in this capacity, was he threatened with *death*, in case he sinned—and, considered in this capacity, was *natural death* denounced upon him after his fall : So that, in both, his posterity were equally included : and therefore St. Paul calls Adam a *type* of *Christ*....*Rom.* v. 14—and calls *Christ* the *second* Adam....I. *Cor.* xv. 45 ; because both these, by the authority of the great Governor of the world, were constituted public persons, to act in the behalf of mankind : And all mankind were so included in them, that St. Paul speaks as if there had been but only these two men, Adam and Christ : I. Cor. xv. 47....*The first man is of the earth, earthy ; the second man is the Lord from heaven.*

2. God, the supreme Ruler of the world, does, in the gospel, consider mankind as being in a perishing condition, not only

on the account of their original apostacy in Adam, their common head and representative, but also *because they are, what they are, in themselves*—(1.) Destitute of the divine image—(2.) Contrary to God in the temper of their hearts—(3.) Utterly averse to a reconciliation—(4.) In a disposition, if unrestrained, to live in all open rebellion against the Majesty of heaven, before his face—(5.) And yet insensible of their just desert, and of their need of sovereign grace; and ready rather to think it a cruel thing, if God should damn them.

(1.) *God saw mankind destitute of his moral image;* for being conscious of the holy temper of his own heart....of the holy propensity of his own nature—and being conscious to the temper of their hearts...to the propensity of their nature, at first view he saw what they were. *God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God: Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doth good...no, not one* ....Psalm liii. 2, 3: He saw mankind destitute of a conformity to his holy law. The law requires mankind to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively—and to love one another as their own souls; but he looked down from heaven....he beheld, and, lo, all the human race were entirely devoid of that temper: None were in a disposition to account him infinitely glorious in being what he was: not one had the least relish or taste for the beauty of his moral perfections: every heart empty of holy love and holy delight, and devoid of any true spirit or principle of obedience; and all mankind had lost that frame of spirit towards one another which they ought to have: The whole world lay in ruin. He knew his law was holy, just, and good, and that his creature, man, was under infinite obligations to a perfect conformity thereto: He saw what grounds there were for the law, and what reasons for their obedience: He saw his own infinite excellency, and his original, underived, entire right to them; and was conscious to his rightful authority over them: He judged them infinitely to blame for their non-conformity, and worthy of an infinite pun-

ishment: Speaking after the manner of men, he did, in the inward temper of his heart, perfectly approve of those words in *Gal.* iii. 10, as being strictly just—*Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them:* Therefore he looked on mankind in a perishing condition. But,

(2.) *He viewed mankind not only destitute of good, but full of evil;*—not only void of the true love to God and to one another, but enemies to God, and living in malice and envy among themselves. He looked down from heaven and viewed a guilty world, and saw their contrariety to his nature and to his law: Conscious of his own divine temper, he saw every contrary temper in them: What he esteems, they despise;—what he delights in, they loathe: The end which he prosecutes, they oppose; and they esteem and delight in that which is contrary to him, and prosecute ends and designs contrary to his: He saw their views, their tempers, their wills, their ends, designs, and ways were all contrary to him, and diametrically opposite to his law: He considered them as his enemies, and their tempers as perfect enmity and contrariety to the divine nature....*Rom.* viii. 7.

(3.) And in as much as he thus saw them entirely destitute of love to him, and diametrically contrary to the divine nature in the temper of their hearts, *he knew they would have no inclination to a reconciliation to God; but would be naturally averse to it:* He knew their aversion to a reconciliation would be as strong as their contrariety to the divine nature, from which it took its rise: He saw that if he should attempt to reclaim them, he should only meet with resistance;—that if he should spread the news of pardon and peace through a guilty world, and invite them to return and be reconciled, that they would make light of it and despise it;—that if he should send messengers after them, to persuade them to return, and beseech them to be reconciled, that they would put many of them to death: He saw just what treatment the prophets, and Christ, and his apostles were like to meet with: He knew not one in all the world would repent and convert, unless brought thereto by his own al-

mighty arm, and all-conquering grace....*Mat.* xxi. 33—39—*Rom.* viii. 7—I. *Cor.* iii. 6, 7.

(4.) *Yea, so far from a disposition to repent and convert, that, if left wholly to themselves, unrestrained, no wickedness would be too bad for them:* All would act as bad as Cain, Manasseth, or Judas; and the whole human race be like so many incarnate devils—they having the seed of all sin in their hearts....*Mark* vii. 21, 22.

(5.) And yet *insensible of their sin and guilt, and just desert, and that they lie merely at the sovereign mercy of God, and that he is at liberty to show mercy, or not, as seems good in his sight:* yea, so averse to the knowledge of this their true state, as to be disposed to hate the light, and shut their eyes against it, ready to resist all methods of conviction;—yea, that some would be even so perverse, as actually to rise in arms against his messengers, who endeavored to shew them their ruin and the way of their recovery, and put them to death, as not fit to live; and yet so stupid as to think, that, in all, they did God good service: And that, in general, a great out-cry would be raised round a proud and guilty world, against the Lord, for supposing mankind to be in so bad, so very forlorn a state. God knew the pride of man, that he is exceedingly proud; and saw how great offence would be given to a guilty world, who would by no means endure to be so affronted....*John* iii. 19, 20, and viii. 33, 47.

Now, such were the grounds upon which God looked upon the human race in a perishing condition....sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone: And considering that the original constitution with Adam, according to which he and all his posterity were doomed to destruction, in case he fell, was holy, just, and good; and considering that the law of nature, which all mankind are naturally under, and according to which the least sin exposes to eternal damnation, is also holy, just, and good; and considering our apostacy in Adam, and what we are in ourselves;—I say, considering all these things, it is most certain and evident that the judgment of God was according to

truth, while he esteemed mankind to be thus in a perishing condition.

That mankind are actually of such a nature, has been demonstrated in the *former discourse:* That God, whose understanding is infinite, and who sees all things as being what they really are, must therefore now see mankind to be such, is self-evident: and *such* as he *now* sees them to be, *such* he, from the beginning, *knew* they would be: It is evident, therefore, *â priori*, that God must have considered mankind to be *such*, when he first entered upon his designs of grace revealed in the gospel: And if we consider the nature of the gospel, and what methods God has taken with a sinful, guilty world, to reclaim and recover them, and how they have behaved under all, it will be still more evident that mankind are verily in such a case.—The law....the gospel, and experience, all join to confirm it.

Had not the gospel considered us as being entirely devoid of the divine image, destitute of any spiritual good thing, blind, dead, graceless, why should it so much urge the necessity of our being *born again*....made *new creatures*....having *our eyes opened*...being *raised from the dead*...being *created anew to good works*...and having *the law written in our hearts*, *the heart of stone taken away*, *and an heart of flesh given?*—Had not the gospel considered us as being *enemies to God*, why should it invite us to be *reconciled?*—Had not the gospel considered us as being very averse to a reconciliation, why should it pray and beseech us, with so much earnestness and solemnity, to be reconciled....and use so many arguments?—Had not the gospel considered our reconciliation as unattainable by the most powerful arguments, of themselves, why should it declare that, after all, neither Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas are any thing, or can do any thing, unless God himself give the increase?—And were we not enemies to God, and rebels, and inveterate haters of the light, and disposed to rise in arms against it, why should Christ tell his ministers, *I send you forth as sheep among wolves; if they have called the master of the house* Beelzebub, *no wonder they call you so; you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake;*

they that kill you will think they do God good service? That generation thought as well of themselves as the present generation now on earth does, and were ready to speak the same language, and say, *If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have killed the prophets;* but Christ knew their hearts: And, had not mankind, on these accounts, been considered as in a perishing condition, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless and undone, why was there provided *such a Redeemer*, and *such a Sanctifier?* And why was the salvation of sinners every where represented as being so *entirely* owing to the grace, the mere grace, the free, astonishing, wonderful grace of God, from first to last? Surely, from all this, most certain and evident it is, that God does, in the gospel, upon these grounds, consider mankind as being in a perishing condition: And upon these grounds we must, therefore, come to consider ourselves so too, or we can never be in a disposition humbly and thankfully to accept the grace offered, and return home to God in the way provided. We shall rather be affronted, that the gospel supposes us to be in so bad a condition; or else never so much as take matters into serious consideration, but do as those invited to the marriage of the king's son, in Mat. xxii. 5....*They made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize.* I do but just hint at these things now, because they have been so largely insisted upon heretofore. And thus we see upon what grounds it is, that the great Governor of the world does, in the gospel, consider mankind as being in a perishing condition.

SECTION II.

SHOWING WHENCE GOD'S DESIGN OF MERCY TOWARDS A PERISHING WORLD ORIGINALLY TOOK ITS RISE.

I proceed now,

II. To show *what were the motives which have excited God to do what he has done, for the recovery of sinners out of this their perishing condition.* And

1. *It was not because the original constitution with Adam, our public head and representative, was too severe: It was not be-*

cause it would have been hard and cruel, or in the least inconsistent with his infinite goodness and tender mercies, to have left all mankind in that state of total ruin they were brought into by the fall: For had not that constitution been, in its own nature, holy, just, and good, and so most perfectly agreeable to his own nature....to his holiness, justice, and goodness, he would never have made it; for he necessarily infinitely abhors, in his public conduct, to act counter to the inward temper of his heart. For the very reason that he loves himself for being what he is, for the same reason he loves to act like himself, and infinitely abhors the contrary: And if that constitution was holy, just, and good, in its own nature, originally, it must remain so still; for Adam's apostacy, together with all the dreadful consequences thereof, could not alter its nature. The constitution is perfectly as excellent as if Adam had never fallen....perfectly as good as if it had been the means of laying a foundation for the everlasting blessedness of all the human race; for it is what it was. It was excellently well calculated for the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind, in its own nature; and therefore God made it.... approved of it....was well pleased with it, nor can he ever alter his mind about it: for it is, in itself, just the same it was at first —and if it was holy, just, and good, in its own nature, and if it remains so still....if the holiness, justice, and goodness of his nature prompted him at first to make it, and then to approve of it, and be perfectly well pleased with it, it could not (it is self-evident) possibly have been, in the least, disagreeable to his holiness, justice, or goodness, to have dealt with all mankind, since the fall, according to it: So that, to a demonstration, God's thoughts of mercy towards a guilty, undone world, did not, in any measure, take its rise from any notion that mankind had been hardly dealt with, or that it would be any thing like cruelty and unmercifulness to damn the whole world for Adam's first sin, according to the tenor of the original constitution. Indeed, to suppose such a thing, highly reflects upon that constitution—and upon God, for ever making it: It supposes the constitution was never really holy, just, and good in its own

nature, and that God did wrong in making it: And the riches and glory of gospel-grace are wholly obscured; for God cannot be considered as a *sovereign benefactor*, showing undeserved mercy to a guilty, hell-deserving world; but rather as repenting for the injury he has done to mankind, and as endeavoring to make amends for it by a better, a juster and kinder conduct for the time to come: And if this were the case, all his pretences, his high pretences to great love and goodness,... to great kindness and grace, are hypocritical, and a mere mocking of us. He had abused and injured us, and is now but *repenting*, and *making restitution;* and ought, therefore, to have said so, and not pretended he did all from *mere grace*, which is to affront us, and make as if that constitution was holy, just, and good, and we righteously condemned, and justly miserable forever: So that, let us view the case in what light we will, it is most evident and certain that the great Governor of the world considered mankind as being righteously condemned, and liable to everlasting destruction, consistent with the infinite goodness of his nature; nor did a thought of pity ever enter into his heart from the contrary supposition: Yea, it seems to have been his very design to maintain the honor of that constitution, while he shows mercy to a guilty world, inasmuch as he has appointed another public person, his own dear Son, to make atonement for our original apostacy, as well as our other sins, that hereby a way for his mercy might be opened....*Rom.* v. 18, 19.

2. Nor did God's designs of mercy towards a guilty, undone world take their rise *from a supposition that the law of nature, which all mankind are naturally under, is too severe, in requiring perfect obedience, and threatening eternal damnation for the very least defect*, (Rom. i. 18—Gal. iii. 10), *or from any supposition that it would have been any thing like cruelty or unmercifulness, to have dealt with all mankind according to that rule.*

To explain myself, I may just observe, that the original constitution with Adam, as public head, (*Gen.* ii. 17) was a *positive* appointment. After he was turned out of the garden, he cea-

sed to sustain the character or capacity of a public person; nor are his posterity accountable for any but his first transgression. But the law of nature results from the nature of things....from God's being what he is in himself, and from our being what we are, and he our Creator and we his creatures: And it was binding, in order of nature, antecedent to any positive constitution whatsoever: nor is its binding nature capable of any dissolution. We might have obtained life, according to the constitution made with Adam, had he kept covenant with God; and been confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness: so now we may obtain life by Jesus Christ, who has fulfilled the law of nature, and made atonement for all sin: But the law of nature still remains an unalterable rule of righteousness between God and his creature, man. We owe perfect obedience to God, and the least sin deserves eternal damnation: And God might always have dealt with mankind simply according to this rule. The original constitution with Adam had some degree of GRACE in it. The constitution in the gospel is altogether GRACE. God might have held all mankind bound by the law of nature simply, nor ever have appointed any other way to happiness, than a perfect and persevering obedience; and mankind have been, to all eternity, in a peccable state, liable to sin and fall into ruin. Whatsoever advantages mankind have had over and above this, are, and have been, of *mere grace*. According to the law of nature, we are under infinite obligations to perfect holiness in the temper of our hearts, and to perfect obedience in the whole course of our lives, and that not only for a day, or a year, or a thousand years, but so long as we continue in being. And so long as we are thus obedient, we shall be happy; but the least defect, at any time whatsoever, will let in everlasting, inevitable ruin upon us. Adam, in innocence, was under the law of nature, as well as under that particular positive constitution in *Gen.* ii. 17: So that any other sin, as well as eating the forbidden fruit, must have exposed him to ruin. But then, by that constitution, he had this peculiar advantage, that, if he persevered, his time of trial should shortly

be at an end, and himself and all his race confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness—an advantage never to be obtained by any one merely under the law of nature: For, in the nature of things, it is impossible God should ever be laid under any obligations to his creatures, unless by virtue of his own free promise, which does not belong to the law of nature, but is an act of grace, which he may grant or withhold, as seems good in his sight. When Adam broke covenant with God, and when that positive constitution was at an end, yet still Adam remained, under the law of nature, bound to perfect obedience, to love God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself; yea, under infinite obligations—and every defect was infinitely sinful, and so was worthy of infinite punishment. And as was the case with him, so is the case with all his posterity: Our obligations are infinite, and so our non-performance infinitely faulty, and worthy of an infinite punishment: Though, indeed, as the case now stands, nor Adam, nor any of his race can ever obtain life by the law of nature; because we are sinners, and so, by the law of nature, are condemned without hope. *Rom.* iii. 20.... *By the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified; for by the law is the knowledge of sin:* And chap. iv. ver. 15... *The law worketh wrath.* And thus, as the case now stands, we are under infinite obligations to perfect obedience, and are liable to an infinite punishment for the least defect: and yet, through the bad temper of our hearts, we are unable to yield any obedience, and are in a disposition to be continually treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.

Now, I say, the supreme King of heaven and earth was not moved to entertain designs of mercy towards a sinful, guilty, undone world, from a supposition that the law of nature was too severe, or that it would have been any thing like unmercifulness to have dealt with all mankind according to that rule: For,

All that this law requires, is, that since GOD is infinitely amiable in himself, and has such an entire right to us, and absolute authority over us as his creatures, we therefore ought to *love him with all our hearts*, and be entirely devoted to him, to do

his will and keep his commands, seeking his glory ; and that, since our neighbors are such as we...of the same species, and under the same general circumstances, we therefore ought to *love our neighbor as ourselves* ;—both which things are, in their own nature, right, and fit, and reasonable : so that the law is *holy :* And all that this law threatens, in case of any transgression, is, that since our obligations are infinite, and so the least defect infinitely wrong, therefore every such defect should be punished with the everlasting pains of hell....and that in exact proportion to the several aggravations attending each trangression ;—which is also, in its own nature, right, and fit, and reasonable : so that the law is *just :* And that perfect holiness which this law requires, i. e. to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves, is the highest perfection our nature is capable of, and altogether suited to make us happy : so that the law is *good.* But,

It is not severe, nor any thing like unmercifulness, to deal with mankind according to a rule, which is, in its own nature, holy, just, and good ; but rather, it must have been agreeable to the holiness, justice, and goodness of the great Governor of the world so to do : And indeed, were not this the case, it would have been fit this law should have been repealed. Mankind did not need to be redeemed from the curse of an unrighteous law ; for such a law ought to be laid aside, and its curses never executed. God would have been bound in justice to have abolished an unrighteous law. There is no need of Christ or gospel-grace in the case : and so all the high commendations of the grace of God in providing a Savior, as being rich, free, and wonderful, are groundless, and cast much reproach upon mankind, as being a guilty race, righteously condemned, when, in truth, it is no such thing. God ought to have owned that the law was wrong, and to have repealed it—and not to have proceeded as if it was very good, and mankind altogether to blame, and worthy of eternal damnation : And mightily would this have pleased an apostate, proud, and guilty world ; and, at the same time, cast infinite reproach upon God and his holy law, and shut out all the grace of the gospel.

God has therefore, in the gospel, not only supposed the law to be holy, just, and good, and mankind righteously condemned; but has taken all possible care to make it evident that he does so, and thereby to secure the honor of his law, discountenance sin, humble the sinner, and exalt and magnify his grace. Even the whole scheme of the gospel is wisely calculated to attain these ends, as we shall see hereafter. So far was God from being moved to pity mankind, from a supposition that they had, in this respect, been too severely dealt with, and so objects of pity in that sense, that, on the contrary, he most perfectly approved of the law, as holy, just, and good—and was altogether in it, that mankind deserved to be proceeded with according to it: Yea, so highly did he approve of his holy law, and so odious and ill-deserving did mankind appear in his eyes for breaking it, that their sin cried aloud for vengeance in his ears;—yea, cried so loud for vengeance, that he judged it necessary that his own Son should appear in their stead and die in their room, to the end that he might be just....might act consistently with the holiness and justice of his nature, while he showed mercy to them... *Rom.* iii. 9—26: In such a light he viewed things—in such a light must we therefore view them too, or we can never truly understand our need of Christ and gospel-grace, or cordially acquiesce in the gospel-way of salvation; but rather shall be disposed to quarrel with the strictness of the law, and think ourselves abused, and imagine that God deals hardly with us.

3. Nor was the supreme Being moved to entertain designs of mercy towards mankind, *from a supposition that their inability to yield perfect obedience made them the less to blame, and so the more proper objects of pity on that account:* For mankind are not the less to blame for their inability; but the more unable they are, the greater is their blame—and so the more proper objects are they of the divine wrath and vengeance.

God is a most excellent and amiable Being. He infinitely deserves our highest love and esteem, and supreme delight. It is perfectly fit we should be of a disposition to say, *Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is nothing on earth we desire*

besides thee...Psalm lxxiii. 25. Now, not to love this God with all our hearts, must be infinitely wrong; and not to love him at all, must be worse still: but to be habitually contrary to him in the temper of our hearts—yea, so averse to him as that we CANNOT love him, must be, in the very highest degree, vile and sinful: And now to say we CANNOT, by way of *extenuation*, as though we were the less to blame for that, is intolerably God-provoking; since our CANNOT arises only from the bad temper of our hearts, and because we are not what we should be—and not at all from any unloveliness in the divine nature, or from our want of external advantages for the knowledge of God.

Put the case to thyself, O man:—Were you as wise as Solomon, as holy as David, as humble as Paul, and of as loving and kind a temper as John....and had you a family of children.... and were all the rules and orders of your house like yourself, and calculated to make all your children just such as you are.... and did you perceive that your children neither liked you, nor your ways, nor the orders of your house—they show you much disrespect in their carriage, disregard your authority, complain your rules are too strict, and daily break over all orders;—at length you call them to an account—are about to convince, humble, and reform them...they plead they are not to blame, at least not *so much* to blame, because they CANNOT love you, they CANNOT like your ways, they CANNOT but abhor such rules and orders; those very properties, on account of which you are indeed the most excellent man in the world, these are the very things for which they dislike you, while, in the mean time, they can most heartily love their companions in vice and debauchery: And now the question is, whether their inability to love you renders them any the less to blame: or, whether it be not very provoking in them, to plead, in excuse for themselves, that they *cannot* love you; when their *cannot* arises from their voluntary contrariety to all good, and love to debauchery; and not at all from any unloveliness of your person or ways; or for want of advantages to be acquainted with you, and with the beauty of your temper and conduct. The application is easy.

Was it any excuse for the ill-will of the malicious *Pharisees* towards Christ, that they *could not* love him....that they *could not* but hate him? Did ever any man look upon a malicious, spiteful neighbor, and think him any the less to blame for his abundant ill-carriage....for his being so exceedingly ill-natured that it was not in his heart to do otherwise? I appeal to the common sense of all mankind.

If such an inability can excuse mankind, then the devils, upon the same footing, may be excused too: And the more any of God's subjects hate him, the less will they be to blame; for the more any do really hate God, the less able will they be to love him;—the more averse to his law, the less able to keep it: And, therefore, since our inability arises from such a root, the more unable we are to love God with all our hearts, and yield a perfect obedience to all his laws, the more vile, guilty, hell-deserving we are, and the more unworthy of pity: So that our moral inability and impotency, or rather *obstinacy*, was, in the nature of things, so far from extenuating our guilt and moving the divine pity, that it was the strongest evidence of our exceeding vileness, and, as it were, a mighty bar and great discouragement in the way of God's ever entertaining any designs of mercy towards us: It was like the great mountains; so that nothing but infinite goodness could have ever surmounted it: And in this light must we view ourselves and our inability, and become self-condemned before God, or we shall never like it that God looks upon us as he does, nor ever be able to look upon his grace in the gospel in the same light with him, nor can we ever heartily approve of and fall in with that way of salvation.

When we are under sufficient outward advantages to come to know what kind of Being God is, and yet, after all, see no beauty in him, nor esteem him, it must be either because we are intolerably bad in our temper, or else because he is not truly, and, indeed, a lovely and amiable Being. When we say we *cannot* love him, under a fond notion that we are hereby excused and are not to blame, we implicitly say, that we are well enough disposed, and are of a good temper, but God is such an hateful Be-

ing that we *cannot* love him;—there is nothing in him to be loved: So that to say we CANNOT, under a notion of extenuating our guilt, casts the highest reflection upon God imaginable, and indeed is big with the blackest blasphemy. We had as good say, "It is not owing to us that we do not love God, but to him.—"We would readily love him, if there was any thing in him for "us to love; but there is not, and so we *cannot*—and therefore "are not to blame."

To suppose, therefore, that God, in the gospel, considers us as being the less to blame for this our inability, and from thence is moved to pity us, is the very same thing in effect as to suppose that God owns himself a hateful, unlovely Being, and thinks it a great hardship that his poor creatures should be forced to love him, or be damned; and therefore repents that ever he was so severe, or ever made such a law, and is sorry for them, and will do better by them for time to come: But how horrid a thought is this! It casts the highest reflection upon God, and upon his holy law, and quite destroys all the grace of the gospel. No, no! God knew well enough how the case stood: He was conscious of his own infinite excellency, and of the infinite reasonableness of his law: He knew the hellish temper of an apostate, rebellious race; and verily he was GOD, and not *man*, or he would have doomed the whole world to destruction without any pity, or so much as one thought of mercy. *Herein was love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins*....I. John iv. 10. *While we were sinners and enemies*, (Rom. v. 8, 10), and most strongly averse to a reconciliation....II. *Cor.* v. 20.

4. Nor did his designs of mercy take their rise *from any expectation that a rebellious, guilty, perishing world would be so good as, of their accord, ever heartily to thank him for it.* No, he knew well enough how it would be—that many would make light of it, and go their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize; and that others would be affronted, and some so very angry that they would take his messengers, and stone one, and beat another, and kill another, and finally would crucify his

Son : And he expected that mankind in general would be disposed to hate his law, and pervert his gospel, and resist his spirit ; and never one, in all the world, repent and convert, and come and humble himself before him, and bless his holy name, unless brought thereto by his own all-conquering grace....*Mat.* xxi. 33—39, and xxii. 1—7—*Luke* xiv. 16—23—I. *Cor.* iii. 6, 7.

So that, from the whole, it is very plain God was not moved to entertain thoughts of mercy towards mankind, neither under a notion that they had been, in any respect, hardly dealt with... nor under a notion that their impotency rendered them in any measure excusable...nor under a notion that there was any good in them or to be expected from them ; but, on the contrary, he looked upon the original constitution with Adam to be holy, just, and good—and that, upon that footing, all mankind deserved ruin ; and he looked upon the law of nature also holy, just, and good—and that, upon that footing, a wicked world deserved his everlasting wrath ; and he looked upon them altogether criminal for their impotency ;—in a word, he looked upon them voluntary in their rebellion, and obstinate in their enmity, and infinitely unworthy of the least pity—yea, so unworthy of pity, that, to secure his own honor, and to save himself from just reproach, while he pitied them, and showed them mercy, he thought it needful that his own Son should become a Mediator, and bear their sin and suffer for their guilt, and so open a way for the honorable exercise of his mercy.

To conclude, therefore,

5. It is evident that his designs of mercy took their rise *merely, absolutely, and entirely from himsef....from his own infinite benevolence....from his self-moving goodness and sovereign grace.* GOD *so loved the world*—

As for us, we lay in the open field of perdition, polluted, perishing in our blood and guilt ; and it was perfectly right that the righteous sentence of the law should be executed upon us : And God had been forever glorious in the everlasting ruin of a rebellious world. There was nothing in our circumstances, all things considered, of the nature of a *motive to pity :* We were

too bad to deserve any pity or relief ;—yea, so bad, that the great Governor of the world could not, without counteracting all good rules of government, show any mercy but by the interposition of his own Son, to stand and die in our room and stead : So that, instead of any motive to pity, there was every thing to the contrary.—Our infinite ill-desert lay as an infinite bar in the way. Here, now, was an opportunity for infinite goodness and self-moving mercy to exert itself, in the most illustrious manner, in designing mercy....in providing a Mediator, and in opening a door for the exercise of much grace to mankind in general, and of special saving mercy in ten thousand thousand instances. There was nothing, *ab extra*, from without God himself, to move and put him on to such a wonderful and glorious enterprise. The motion was wholly from himself...from his self-moving goodness....from his good pleasure, according to the counsel of his own will....*Eph.* i. 3—12 : No wonder, therefore, the gospel every where celebrates the love and goodness, mercy and grace of God, as being rich and free, unparalleled, unspeakable, inconceivable, infinitely great and glorious, as discovered in this most wonderful of all God's works : And to suppose that God was under any obligations to show these favors, would be to undermine and overthrow the whole gospel, and turn a deed of the *freest* and *greatest grace* into a work of *mere justice*.—Thus we see whence God's thoughts of mercy, towards a sinful, guilty world, had their rise.

He had in view a great variety of glorious designs, all infinitely wise....all suited to display the glorious perfections of his nature, and bring everlasting honors to his great name : He designed to destroy the works of the devil....*Gen.* iii. 15—I. *John* iii. 8. Satan had induced mankind to their rebellion ; and had, perhaps, in his conceit too, made himself strong against the Almighty : He first rebelled himself, and now he had brought others to join with him, and in this world he intended to rule and reign ; and, by the whole, bring much reproach upon the rightful Lord of heaven and earth. God wrought, therefore, for his great name's sake, that it might not be polluted ; and en-

tered upon methods to defeat his designs, and bring his kingdom to nought, and crush the rebellion, and put him to open shame—and at length bind him up in his chains, that he should deceive the nations of the earth no more—and give all nations, languages, and tongues, to Jesus Christ, and bring the whole world into subjection to him....*Rev.* xx. 1—4. He designed to display his glorious grace, in bringing millions of this seduced, apostate race from the jaws of eternal destruction to eternal glory....*Rom.* ix. 23—*Eph.* ii. 7. He designed to put all mankind in a new state of probation, and to display his glorious goodness, patience, forbearance, and long-suffering, in his dealings with the obstinate and finally impenitent in this world, and his glorious holiness and justice in their everlasting punishment in the world to come, in the same lake of fire and brimstone which was prepared for the devil and his angels, with whom they had joined in their rebellion against the Majesty of heaven ....*Acts* xiv. 17—*Rom.* ii. 4, and xix. 22—*Mat.* xxv. 41 :—In a word, he designed to take occasion, from the apostacy of mankind, in the innumerable instances in this world, and throughout eternal ages in the world to come, to display all his glorious perfections : and so, by his whole conduct, to exhibit a most perfect and exact image of himself.

Thus we see that his designs of mercy towards a rebellious, guilty, undone world, took their rise, not from any motives in us, but altogether from motives in himself—from the infinite, boundless goodness of his nature, and his sovereign good pleasure : And in this light must we view the grace of the gospel ; and all our encouragements to hope in his mercy, through Jesus Christ, must take their rise, not from any thing in ourselves, but only from that self-moving goodness and free grace which he has manifested through Jesus Christ....*Rom.* iii. 19, 20, 24 —*Eph.* ii. 8.

And thus we see that his end, as to the elect, was to bring them back from their apostacy, their rebellion, and wickedness, and ruin, to God, their rightful Lord and Sovereign, to become his servants, to love him, and live to him, and live upon him,

and be blessed in him forever: And in this light must we view the gospel; and with this its design must we heartily fall in. And being encourged, by the grace of the gospel, to hope for acceptance in the sight of God, through Jesus Christ, we must, through Christ, give up ourselves to God, to be his servants forever....*Luke* i. 74, 75—II. *Cor.* v. 20—*Rom.* xii. 1—*Tit.* ii. 11—14.

From what has been said, it will be very natural to make these following *remarks:*

Rem. 1. If all God has done in the gospel, for our recovery from ruin, be of mere free grace, then it is self-evident *that God was under no obligations to a fallen, sinful, guilty, rebellious world; but, as for us, might have, consistent with all his perfections, left us in ruin, to inherit the fruit of our doings, and the punishment of our sin.* He was under no obligation to provide a Redeemer, or a Sanctifier....to give the least hint of a pardon, or take any methods to recover us from the power of sin. He was under no obligations to deal any better by us, than would, in the whole, be no worse than damnation. By the constitution with Adam, and by the law of nature, this would have been our proper due. Every thing, therefore, whereby our circumstances have been rendered better than the circumstances of the damned, God was under no obligations unto; but all, over and above that, has been of free and sovereign grace. God was at liberty, as to us, not to have done any of these things for us: Yea, there were on our part *mighty hinderances* to prevent the mercy of God, and to put a *bar* in the way of the free and honorable exercise of his grace: even such hinderances, that nothing could remove them, but the blood of Christ. Hence,

Rem. 2. *Mankind were, by their fall, brought into a state of being infinitely worse than not to be.* The damned in hell, no doubt, are in such a state, else their punishment would not be infinite; as justice requires it should be: But mankind, by the fall, were brought into a state, for substance,* as bad as that

* *For substance,* I say, because it must be remembered that the superadded punishment inflicted upon any in hell, for despising the gospel, must

which the damned are in: For the damned undergo nothing in hell, but what, by the constitution with Adam, and the law of nature, all mankind were, and would have been, for substance, exposed unto, if mere grace had not prevented. And, according to what was but now observed, God was under no more obligation to grant any relief to mankind, in this their fallen, sinful, guilty, undone condition, than he is now to the damned in hell; i. e. under no obligations at all: but the way for mercy to come to them was mightily barred and blocked up, by the infinite reasonableness of their being punished, and their infinite unworthiness, in the very nature of things, as the case then stood, of ever being pitied: So that mankind were, by the fall, brought into a state of being, (in scripture called *condemnation* and *wrath*....*Rom.* v. 18—*Eph.* ii. 3,) for substance, as bad as that which the damned are in; so that, if the damned are in a state of being infinitely worse than not to be, as no doubt they are, then so also were mankind: And mankind being actually brought into such a state by the fall, is what renders the grace of the gospel so inconceiveble, so unspeakable in its greatness, and so absolutely free. To deny that mankind, by the fall, were brought into such a state, is the same thing, in effect, as to deny original sin, and undermine the glorious grace of the gospel.

OBJ. *But how could God, consistent with his perfections, put us into a state of being worse than not to be? Or how can we ever thank God for such a being?*

ANS. Our being brought into so bad a state was not owing to God, i. e. to any fault in him, but merely to ourselves.... to our apostacy from God. It was our apostacy from God that brought all this upon us, in way of righteous judgment.... *Rom.* v. 18, 19. Our being in so bad a state is no more owing to God, than theirs is who are now in hell. They deserve to be in hell, according to a law that is holy, just, and good; and

be left out of the account: For all this is over and above what, by the constitution with Adam, and the law of nature, mankind were or ever would have been exposed unto.

we deserve to be in such a state, according to the constitution made with Adam, which was also holy, just, and good: and therefore the one may be consistent with the divine perfections, as well as the other. It cannot be disagreeable to the holiness, justice, and goodness of the divine nature, to deal with mankind according to a constitution, in its own nature holy, just, and good.

Now, in as much as God did virtually give *being* to all mankind, when he *blessed* our first parents, and said, *Be fruitful, and multiply;* and in as much as *being*, under the circumstances that man was then put in by God, was very desirable...we ought, therefore, to thank God for our *being*, considered in this light, and justify God in all the evil that is come upon us for our apostacy; for the Lord is righteous, and we are a guilty race.

Those in hell are in a state of being infinitely worse than not to be; and, instead of thanking God for their beings, they blaspheme his name: but still there is no just ground for their conduct: They have no reason to think hard of God for damning them; they have no reason to blame him; they have no reason to esteem him any the less for it: he does what is fit to be done: His conduct is amiable; and he is worthy of being esteemed for doing as he does....and all holy beings will always esteem him for it....(*Rev.* xix. 1—6.) Therefore the damned ought to ascribe all their evil to themselves, and justify God, and say, "He gave us being...and it was a mercy...and he de-"serves thanks; but to us it is owing that we are now in a state "infinitely worse than not to be: God is not to blame for that; "nor is he the less worthy of thanks for giving us being, and "for all past advantages which we ever enjoyed: for the "law is holy, just, and good, by and according to which we "suffer all these things:"—So here: Mankind, by the fall, were brought into a state of being infinitely worse than not to be: and were they but so far awake as to be sensible of it, they would no doubt, all over the earth, murmur, and blaspheme the God of heaven. But what then?...There would be no just ground for such conduct: We have no reason to think hard

of God—to blame him, or to esteem him any the less. What he has done was fit and right; his conduct was beautiful; and he is worthy to be esteemed for it: for that constitution was holy, just, and good, as has been proved: And therefore a fallen world ought to ascribe to themselves all their evil, and to justify God, and say, "God gave us being under a constitution ho-"ly, just, and good; and it was a mercy: We should have ac-" counted it a great mercy, in case Adam had never fallen; but " God was not to blame for this....nor therefore is he the less " worthy of thanks: All that we suffer is by and according to "a constitution in its own nature holy, just, and good:" Thus mankind ought to have said, had God never provided a Savior, but left all the world in ruin: and thus ought they to have justified God's conduct—laid all the blame to themselves, and acknowledged that God deserved praise from all his works; which, as they came out of his hands, *were all very good*....Gen. i. 31.

OBJ. *But although we were, by the fall, brought into such a state of wrath and condemnation, yet now we are delivered out of it by Christ;* for as, in *Adam*, all die, so, in CHRIST, shall all be made alive.

ANS. Before men believe in Christ, they are as justly exposed to divine vengeance, as if Christ had never died....*John* iii. 18, 36: And there is nothing to keep off vengeance, one moment, but sovereign mercy; which yet they continually affront and provoke....*Rom.* ii. 4, 5: And they are so far from an inclination to turn to God of their own accord, that they are disposed to resist all the means used to reclaim them....*John* iii. 19. It is true, God is ready, through Christ, to receive returning sinners, and invites all to return through him: Thus God is good and kind to an apostate world, and offers us mercy. God is not to blame that we are in so bad a case: our destruction is of ourselves, and the Lord is righteous: But still it is evident we are in a perishing condition, and shall certainly perish, notwithstanding all that we, of our own mere motion, ever shall do. If sovereign grace does not prevent, there is no hope.

OBJ. *But if mankind are thus, by nature, children of wrath —in a state of being worse than not to be, and, even after all that Christ has done, are in themselves thus utterly undone, how can men have a heart to propagate their kind, or account it a blessing to have a numerous posterity ?*

ANS. It is manifest by their conduct—by their neglecting their children's souls, and caring only for their bodies, that parents, in general, do not propagate with any concern about the spiritual and eternal well-being of their posterity. It is probable, in general, they are influenced by the same motive that the brutal world are, together with a desire to have children under the notion of a worldly comfort, without scarcely a thought of what will become of their posterity for eternity.

As to *godly* parents, they have such a spirit of love to God, and resignation to his will, and such an approbation of his dispensations toward mankind, and such a liking to his whole scheme of government, that they are content that God should govern the world as he doss....and that he should have subjects to govern....and that themselves and their posterity should be under him, and at his disposal: Nor are they without hopes of mercy for their children, from sovereign grace through Christ, while they do, through him, devote and give them up to God, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: And thus they quiet themselves as to their souls. And now, considering children merely as to this life, it is certain that it is a great comfort and blessing to parents to have a promising offspring.

As to *carnal* men, since they are enemies to God and his holy law, it is no wonder they are at enmity against his whole scheme of conduct as Governor of the world. Did they understand how God governs the world, and firmly believe it, I doubt not it would make all their native enmity ferment to perfection: They would wish themselves to be from under God's government, and hate that he should ever have any thing of theirs to govern: As soon as ever they enter into the eternal world, and see how things really are, this will, no doubt, actual-

ly be their case:—In a word, if men heartily like the original constitution with Adam, as being, in its own nature, holy, just, and good, this objection will, upon mature consideration, be no difficulty with them; and if they do not, it is not any thing that can be said, will satisfy them. But wicked men's not liking the constitution, does not prove it to be bad.

OBJ. *It cannot be thought a blessing to have children, if the most of them are likely, finally, to perish.*

ANS. The most of Abraham's posterity, no doubt, for above these three thousand years, have been wicked, and have perished; and God knew before-hand how it would be; and yet he promised such a numerous posterity under the notion of a great blessing....*Gen.* xxii: For, considering children merely as to this life, they may be a great blessing and comfort to parents, and an honor to them; but it is very fitting our children should be God's subjects, and under his government: Nor are they any the less blessings to us, as to this life, because they must be accountable to God in the life to come: They may be a great comfort to us in this life; and we are certain God will do them no wrong in the life to come. All men's murmuring thoughts about this matter arise from their not liking God's way of governing the world.

REM. 3. *Then do we begin to make a just estimate of the grace ...the free, rich, and glorious grace of God, the great Governor of the world, displayed in the gospel, when we consider mankind, by and according to a constitution and a law, both of them holy, just, and good, actually in such a ruined state.* Now we may begin a little more to see the natural import of those words, *God so loved the world:* such a world was it, that he loved and pitied: a world in so bad a state: a perishing world, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, altogether helpless and undone: And to have a door opened by the blood of Christ, for us to be raised from the depth of such ruin, is wonderful grace indeed. And in this light does the matter stand in scripture-account: for, according to that, *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation; and, by the disobedience of one, many were made* (or

constituted) *sinners*, by virtue of the original constitution with Adam*....*Rom.* v. 18, 19: And *all the world stood guilty before God*, by virtue of their want of conformity unto and transgression of the law of nature, or moral law....*Rom.* iii. 9, 19: And hence mankind were considered as being under *sin*, and under the *curse of the law*, and under the *wrath of God*....Rom. iii. 9—Gal. iii. 10—John iii. 16—Rom. i. 18: And under this notion Christ was appointed, to *save his people from their sins*, (Mat. i. 21)—to *deliver them from the wrath to come*, (I. Thes. i. 10)—and to bring it to pass, that whereas, *by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, many might be made righteous*....Rom. v. 19: And hence the gospel so mightily magnifies the *grace* of God, his *love* and *goodness*, as being unparalleled, unspeakable, inconceivable, passing knowledge. *God so loved the world*, says Christ....*God commendeth his love*, saith Paul....*Herein is love*, says John. It has *height* and *length*, *depth* and *breadth*: It is *rich grace*, and the *exceeding riches of grace*. And why? why is it so magnified and extolled?—Why, for this, among other reasons, because all this was done while *we did not love God*....while we were *sinners*.... while we were *ungodly*....while we were *enemies*....while we were *exposed to wrath*, *guilty before God*, *perishing*, *lost*, *without strength*: Thus God has represented it in his word—his *word* which is the *image* of his mind, and which shows us how he looks upon things, and how they really are.—See *John* iii. 16, 36—*Rom.* v. 6, 7, 8—I. *John* iv. 10—*Eph.* i. 7, and ii. 7, 8, and iii. 19—*Mat.* xviii. 11, &c.

Never, therefore, can a sinner rightly understand the gospel of Christ, or see his need of the provision therein made, or in any measure make a just estimate of the grace of God therein displayed, until he is, in some measure, convinced and made really sensible, by the spirit of God, that he is actually in such a sinful, guilty, helpless, undone condition. This, therefore, is

* *Constituted sinners*, it is in the original; for it was by virtue of that primitive *constitution* with Adam, that his first sin laid all his posterity under sin, guilt, and ruin.

absolutely necessary, in order to a genuine compliance with the gospel by faith in Jesus Christ. *Luke* v. 31....*For the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick:* And as this is requisite, in order to the first act of faith, so, for the same reason, must we all our days live under a realizing sense of this our sinful, guilty, undone state, by nature, and in ourselves, in order to live by faith: And this will make Christ precious, and the grace of the gospel precious—and effectually awaken us to gratitude and thankfulness; for now every thing in our circumstances, wherein we are better of it than the damned, will be accounted so great a mercy, and the effect of mere grace: And so far as we are from a clear sight and realizing sense of this our sinful, guilty, undone state, so far shall we be insensible of the preciousness of Christ, and the freeness of grace, and the greatness of God's mercy towards us.

Thus, having considered the *grounds* upon which the most high God did look upon mankind as being in a perishing condition, and the *motives* whereby he was excited to enter upon any methods for their recovery, we proceed now more particularly to consider the *ways* and *means* he has taken and used to bring it about.

SECTION III.

CONCERNING THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION FOR SIN.

I am now,

III. To show *what necessity there was for a Mediator, and how the way to life has been opened by him whom God has provided.* It is plainly supposed that there was a necessity of a Mediator, and of such an one too as God has actually provided, in order to our salvation; for, otherwise, it had been no *love* or goodness in God to have *given his only begotten Son:* For there can be no love or goodness in his doing that for us which we do not need, and without which we might have been saved as well. Nor is it to be supposed that God would give his Son to die for a guilty world without *urgent necessity.* If some cheaper and easier way might have been found out, he would

surely have spared his beloved Son; he had no inclination to make light of his Son's blood; it was a *great thing* for a GOD to become *incarnate*, and *die;* and there must, therefore, have been some very urgent considerations, to induce the wise Governor of the world to such an expedient: And here, then, these things may be particularly enquired into:

1. What necessity was there of satisfaction for sin?

2. What satisfaction has there been made? And wherein does its sufficiency consist?

3. How has the way to life been opened by the means?

4. What methods has the great Governor of the world entered upon for the actual recovery of sinful creatures?

1. We are to consider *what necessity there was of satisfaction for sin.* It was needful, or else no satisfaction would have been ever required or made: And the necessity was certainly very great and urgent, or the *Father* would never have been willing to have given his *Son*, or the Son to have undertaken the work....a work attended with so much labor and suffering. But why was it necessary? This, I think, will appear, if we deliberately and seriously weigh these things:

(1.) *That God, the great Creator, Preserver, and absolute Lord of the whole world, is not only a Being of infinite understanding and almighty power, but also a Being infinite and unchangeable in all moral propensities: he loves right and hates wrong to an infinite degree, and unchangeably; or, in scripture-language, he thus loves righteousness and hates iniquity.* By his infinite understanding, he sees all things as being what they really are: Whatsoever is fit and right, he beholds as being such; and whatsoever is unfit and wrong, he also beholds as being such: And as are his views, so is the temper of his heart—he infinitely loves that which is fit and right, and infinitely hates that which is unfit and wrong: or, in other words, he has an infinite sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart; i. e. infinitely loves the one, and infinitely hates the other. From eternity, God has had an all-comprehensive view of things....of every thing that was possi-

ble to be or that actually would be....and of all the relations one being would bear to another, and the relation that all would bear to him—and has seen what conduct would be right and fit in him towards them, and in them towards him and towards one another, and what would be wrong : and, from eternity, it has been his *nature* infinitely to love that which is right, and hate that which is wrong : And this, *his nature*, has influenced him in all his conduct, as moral Governor of the world ; and he has given so bright a representation of it, that this seems to be the first and most natural idea of God that we can attain : It shines through all the scriptures....through the law and the gospel, and through his whole conduct, in a thousand instances.

God does not appear to be a Being influenced, acted, and governed by a groundless, arbitrary self-will, having no regard to right reason....to the moral fitness and unfitness of things ; nor does he appear to be a Being governed and acted by a groundless fondness to his creatures. If a thing is not right, he will not do it, merely because he is above controul.....is the greatest and strongest, and can bear down all before him....*Gen.* xviii. 25 : And if a thing is wrong, he will not connive at it at all, because it was acted by his creatures, although ever so dear to him, and although the most exalted in dignity, honor, and privileges ;—for instance, the *sinning angels....sinning Adam....* the *Israelites* in the wilderness, his peculiar people. Moses, for speaking unadvisedly with his lips, shall not enter into Canaan. David, the man after his own heart, he sinned ; and *the sword*, says God, *shall not depart from thy house :* Yea, he spared not his *own Son*, when he stood in the room of sinners. If he had been governed by any thing like human fondness, surely it would now have appeared : And besides, if that were the case, he could never bear to see the damned lie in the dreadful torments of hell to all eternity : Indeed, by all he has said, and by all he has done, he appears to have an infinite sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart ; and to be governed and actuated by this temper, under the direction of infinite wisdom : Hence, as is his *nature*,

so is the *name* which he has taken to himself, viz. the HOLY ONE *of Israel.*

It is true he is a Being of infinite goodness and mercy; yet that is not a *fond*, but a *holy* propensity, under the government of infinite wisdom: that is, he considers the happiness and good of his creatures, his intelligent creatures, as being what it is.—He sees what it is worth, and of how great importance it is; and how much to be desired, in itself, and compared with other things: he sees it to be just what it really is, and has an answerable disposition of heart, i. e. is desirous of their happiness, and averse to their misery, in an exact proportion to the real nature of the things in themselves. It is true, so great is his benevolence, that there is not any act of kindness or grace so great, but that he can find in his heart to do it—yea, has an infinite inclination to do it, if, all things considered, in his unerring wisdom, he judges it fit and best: and yet, at the same time, it is as true, such is the perfect rectitude and spotless purity of his nature, that there is not any act of justice so tremendous, or any misery so dreadful, but that he can find in his heart, his creatures' happiness notwithstanding, to do that act of justice, and inflict that misery, if need so require—yea, he has an infinite inclination thereto. He regards their happiness and misery as being what they are, of very great importance in themselves, but of little importance, compared with something else. He had rather the whole system of intelligent creatures should lie in hell to all eternity, than do the very least thing that is in itself unfit and wrong: Yea, if it was put to his own case, if we could possibly suppose such a thing, he would make it appear that he does as he would be done by, when he punishes sinners to all eternity. It was, in a sort, put to his own case once, when his Son, who was as himself, stood in the room of a guilty world—and his heart did not fail him; but he appeared as great an enemy to sin then as ever he did, or will do to all eternity. His treating his Son as he did, in the garden and upon the cross, immediately himself and by his instruments, was as bright an evidence of the temper of his heart, as if he had

damned the whole world. He appeared what he was then, as much as he will at the day of judgment: He is infinite in goodness; yet he is infinitely averse to do any act of kindness, at the expence of justice, from mere fondness to his creatures.

And as his goodness is not fondness, so his justice is not *cruelty*. He infinitely hates that which is unfit and wrong, and is disposed to testify his hatred in some visible, public manner, by inflicting some proportionable punishment;—not because sinners hurt him, and so make him angry and revengeful; for their obedience can do him no good, nor their disobedience any hurt ....*Job* xxxv. 6, 7;—nor indeed so much because they hurt themselves; for if they did wrong in no other respect, he would never treat them with such severity: but this is the truth of the case—the great Governor of the world has an infinite sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart: and so he infinitely loves that which is fit, and commends and rewards it; and infinitely hates the contrary, and forbids and punishes it;—only it must be remembered, that the rewards he grants to the good are of mere bounty as to them, because they can deserve nothing....*Rom.* xi. 35. But the punishments he inflicts on the wicked are pure justice, because they deserve all....*Rom.* vi. 23: For although creatures cannot merit *good* at the hands of God, from whom they receive all, and to whom they owe all, yet they can merit *evil*: Nevertheless, rewards and punishments are both alike in this respect, viz. that they are visible public testimonies borne by the Governor of the world to the moral amiableness of virtue on the one hand, and to the moral hatefulness of vice on the other.—The one is not the effect of fondness, nor the other of cruelty; but the one results from the holiness and goodness of the divine nature, and the other from his holiness and justice. By the one, it appears how he loves virtue, and how exceedingly bountiful he is; and, by the other, how he hates sin, and how much he is disposed to discountenance it, by treating it as being what it is.

Thus, I say, in the first place, we must consider God, the supreme Governor of the world, as a Being not only of infinite

understanding and almighty power, but also infinite and unchangeable in all moral propensities—as one having a perfect sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart; or, in scripture-language, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty....the holy one of Israel: The Lord God gracious and merciful, but by no means clearing the guilty....Of purer eyes than to behold iniquity....Who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity....Who renders to every one according to their doings*, &c. Without a right idea of God, the supreme Governor of the world, and a realizing, living sense of him on our hearts, it is impossible we should rightly understand the methods he has taken to open a way for his mercy to come out after a rebellious, guilty world, or truly see into the grounds of his conduct—the reasons of his doing as he has done. If we know God, and have a taste for moral beauty, we shall be in a disposition to understand the gospel; but otherwise we shall not.... *John* vii. 17, and viii. 47: For, in the whole of this great affair of our redemption, he has acted altogether like himself.

(2.) *God is infinitely excellent, glorious, and amiable in being what he is.* His having such a nature or temper, and, at the same time, being of infinite understanding and almighty power, renders him infinitely excellent, glorious, and amiable, far beyond the conceptions of any finite mind. Isa. vi. 3....*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the whole earth is full of thy glory.*

Hence, *God loves, esteems, and delights in himself infinitely:* not indeed from what we call a selfish spirit; for could we suppose there was another just what he is, and himself an inferior, he would love, esteem, and delight in that other, as entirely as he does now in himself: It is his being what he is, that is the ground of his self-love, esteem, and delight.

Hence, again, *he loves to act like himself*, in all his conduct as moral Governor of the world, *as entirely as he loves himself;* and it is *as much contrary to his nature* to *counteract the temper of his heart*, in his public conduct, as to *cease to be what he is:* And the plain reason is, that there is the same ground for the one as for the other. He loves himself, because he is most ex-

cellent in being what he is ; and, for the same reason, he loves to act like himself, because that is most excellent too : He cannot be willing to cease to be of that temper or nature he is of, because it is most excellent ; and, for the same reason, he cannot be willing to counteract it, because it is most excellent to act agreeably to it in all things : He is under necessity to love himself ; and he is under the same necessity to act like himself....*Gen.* xviii. 25 : Hence it is a common thing for God, in great earnestness, to say in his word, *I will do so and so, and they shall* KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD : as if he should say—"A guilty, rebellious race may think and say what they will "of me, yet I am what I am, and I will act like myself, and all "the world shall know that I am the Lord, i. e. that I am what "I pretend to be : They shall know it by my conduct, sooner "or later."

(3.) *God cannot be said to act like himself, unless he appears as great an enemy to sin, in his public government of the world, as he really is at heart.* If his conduct as moral Governor of the world, the whole being taken together, should look with a more favorable aspect towards sin, or appear less severe than really he is, then it is self-evident that his conduct would not be like himself, nor would it tend to exhibit a true idea of him to all attentive spectators in all his dominions. If his creatures and subjects, in such a case, should judge of his *nature* by his *conduct*, they would necessarily frame wrong notions of the divine Being: And he himself must see and know that he did not act like himself ; nor appear, in his conduct, to be what he was in his heart.

But God, the supreme Governor of the world, does, at heart, look upon sin as an infinite evil ; and his aversion and enmity to it is infinite. He looks upon it, and (to speak of him after the manner of men) is affected towards it, as being what it really is. But it is infinitely wrong and wicked, for us not to love him with all our heart, and obey him in every thing : The least sin is an infinite evil ; and such he sees it to be, and as such does he abhor it. The infinite evil of sin does not consist

in its lessening God's essential glory or blessedness ; for they are both independent on us, and far out of our reach : nor does it consist merely in its tendency to make us miserable : But, in its own nature, it is infinitely wrong, in as much as we are under infinite obligations to perfect holiness. Our obligations to love God with all our heart are in proportion to his amiableness ; but that is infinite : not to do so, therefore, is infinitely wrong. But, as has been said, God has an infinite sense of the moral fitness and unfitness of things, and an answerable frame of heart : i. e. he infinitely loves that which is right, and infinitely hates that which is wrong: And therefore he infinitely hates the least sin.

If, therefore, he acts like himself, he must, in his public government of the world, his whole conduct being taken together, appear, in the most evident manner, to be an infinite enemy to the least sin : He must appear infinitely severe against it ; and never do any thing, which, all things considered, seems to look at all with another aspect.

(4.) *God, the supreme Governor of the world, cannot be said to appear an infinite enemy to sin, and to appear infinitely severe against it, and that without the least appearance of a favorable aspect towards it in his conduct, unless he does always, throughout all his dominions, not only in word threaten, but in fact punish it, with infinite severity, without the least mitigation or abatement in any one instance whatsoever.*

If he should never, in his government of the world, say or do any thing against sin, it would seem as if he was a friend to it, or at least very indifferent about it. If he should say, and not do....threaten to punish, but never inflict the punishment, his creatures and subjects might be tempted to say, " He pretends to be a mighty enemy to sin, and that is all." If he should generally punish sin with infinite severity, but not always, there would at least be some favorable aspect towards sin, in his visible conduct ; and his subjects might be ready to say, " If he can suffer sin to go half unpunished, why not alto-
" gether ? And if altogether at one time, why not at another ?

"And if he can abate the threatened punishment in some de-
"gree, in some instances, why not altogether, in all instances?
"If there is no absolute necessity that sin should be punished,
"why does he ever punish it? But if it be absolutely necessary,
"why does he ever suffer it to go unpunished?" It would seem, at least, by such a conduct, as if sin was not so exceedingly bad a thing but that it might escape punishment sometimes—and as if God was not such an infinite, unchangeable enemy to it, but that he might be disposed to treat it with a little favor:—In a word, if God should always punish sins, not one excepted, and that throughout all his dominions, and yet not do it always with *infinite severity;* but, in some instances, one in a million we will say, should abate a little, and but a very little; yet so much as he abates, be it more or less, so much does he treat sin in a favorable manner, and so much does he fall short of treating it with due severity, and so far does he appear, in his conduct, from being an infinite, unchangeable enemy to it: So that it is very evident that he cannot, in his conduct, as moral Governor of the world, appear an infinite, unchangeable enemy to sin, without the least appearance to the contrary, in any other possible way or method, than by always punishing it with infinite severity, without the least abatement, in any one instance, in any part of his dominions, in time or eternity. And this would be to act like himself; and in and by such conduct, he would appear to be what he is. But to do otherwise, would be to counteract his own nature, and give a false representation of his heart, by a conduct unlike himself.

Thus, it is the nature of God, the great Governor of the world, in all his conduct, to act like himself: But he cannot be said to act like himself, unless he appears as great an enemy to sin, and as severe against it, as he really is, without the least shadow of the contrary: but his conduct cannot appear in this light, unless he does, in fact, punish sin with infinite severity, throughout all his dominions, without the least mitigation, in any one instance, in time or eternity: therefore it is the nature of God, the Governor of the world, to do so; and therefore he

can no sooner, nor any easier, be willing to let any sin go unpunished, than he can to cease to be what he is :* For, as was before proved, it is as impossible for him to act contrary to his own nature, as it is to cease to be what he is : and he can consent to the one as easily as to the other.

Hence, we may learn, this is *really a branch of the law of nature, That sin should be punished :* it results from the nature of God, the Governor of the world ; it was no arbitrary constitution ; it did not result from the divine sovereignty. It would, in the nature of things, have been no evil for Adam to have eaten of the *tree of knowledge*, had not God forbidden it ; herein God exercised his sovereign authority, as absolute Lord of all things : But in threatening sin with eternal death, he acted not as a sovereign, but as a righteous Governor : his nature prompted him to do so ; he could not have done otherwise. As it is said in another case, *It is impossible for God to lie ;* so it may be said here, *It is impossible for God to let sin go unpunished.* As he cannot go counter to himself *in speaking*, so neither *in acting*. It is as contrary to his nature to let sin go unpunished, as it is to lie ; for his *justice* is as much himself, as his *truth ;* and it is, therefore, equally impossible he should act contrary to either.

Hence, this branch of the law of nature *is not capable of any repeal or abatement :* For since it necessarily results from the nature of God, the Governor of the world, it must necessarily remain in force so long as God continues to be what he is. Besides, if God should repeal it, he must not only counteract his own nature, but also give great occasion to all his subjects to think he was once too severe against sin, and that now he had altered his mind, and was become more favorable towards it : which he can no more be willing to do, than he can be wil-

* God's mild and kind conduct towards a guilty world at present, is nothing inconsistent with this ; because mankind are now dealt with in and through a mediator, upon whom *our sins have been laid*, and who has been *made a curse* for us. In him our sins have been treated with infinite severity, without the least abatement. But for this, God's conduct, no doubt, would be very inconsistent with his perfections.

ling actually to cease to be what he is: For, as he loves himself perfectly for being what he is, so he perfectly loves to act like himself, and to appear in his conduct just as he is in his heart: Therefore our Savior expressly asserts, *That heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law shall fail*....Mat. v. 18.

(5.) *But all this notwithstanding, yet God did, of his infinite goodness and sovereign grace, entertain designs of mercy towards a fallen world....a rebellious, obstinate, stubborn, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving race, under the righteous condemnation of the law ....a law, like himself, holy, just, and good.* Particularly, he designed to declare himself reconcileable to this sinful, guilty world ....to put mankind into a new state of probation....to try and see if they would repent and return unto him, and to use a variety of methods for their recovery: And to make way for this, he designed to reprieve a guilty world, for a certain space of time, from that utter ruin he had threatened, and to grant a sufficiency of the good things of this life for their support, while in a state of probation; and he also purposed to grant a general resurrection from the dead, that those who should return to him and be reconciled might be most completely happy in the world to come. And because he knew their aversion to a reconciliation, therefore he designed to use a variety of external means to bring them to it: And because he knew that mankind would be universally disposed to hate all such means, *(not liking to have God in their knowledge)*, and cast them off, and get from under them, therefore he designed, in his sovereign grace, to select some part of mankind, (the Jews for instance) with whom, by his special providence...by the more open or secret workings of his almighty power, such means should be continued. And, in the fulness of time, he purposed also to use equal, yea, greater means with various nations of the Gentiles: And because he knew that all external means notwithstanding, yet all, with one consent, would refuse to repent, and convert, and be reconciled, therefore he designed, by his providence, and by the more common influences of his spirit, to take some farther pains with

many, and try them: And because he knew that this would never effectually persuade them, through the great perverseness of mankind, therefore he designed, by the special influences of his holy spirit, through his almighty power and all-conquering grace, all their obstinacy notwithstanding, yet to reclaim, and recover, and bring home to himself, a certain number in this world, and here train them up for eternal glory, and finally bring them thereunto—and all of his sovereign goodness, and all to the praise of the glory of his grace. And towards the latter end of that space of time, in which this world was to be reprieved, it was his purpose more eminently to destroy Satan's kingdom on earth and his influence among mankind, and more generally recover the guilty nations from his thraldom, and set up his own kingdom on earth, to flourish in great glory and prosperity a thousand years: Such were his designs, as is evident by the event of things, and from the revelation he has made in his word of what is yet to come to pass.

(6.) *But as the case then stood, it was not fit that any of these favors should be granted to a guilty world; no, not any thing that had so much as (all things considered) the nature of a mercy, without some sufficient* salvo *to the divine honor.** Indeed, some kind of reprieve, I presume, might have been granted to a guilty world, so as to have suffered the human race to have propagated, and the whole designed number to have been born —a reprieve, all things considered, not of the nature of a mer-

* Obj. *But if God could not, consistently with his perfections, shew any mercy to a guilty world without a sufficient* salvo *to his honor, how could he, consistently with his perfections, provide them a mediator? Was not this a great mercy? And what* salvo *had he for his honor in doing it?*

Ans. The very doing of this thing itself was to secure his own honor. This was the very end he had nextly in view. Were it not for this end, a mediator had not been needful; but a guilty world might have been pardoned by an act of absolute sovereign grace. Now his taking such a glorious method to secure his honor, and the honor of his law, and government, and sacred authority, had no tendency to misrepresent them: He acted in it just like himself. His infinite wisdom, holiness, justice, and goodness, are all at once most perfectly displayed in this conduct of the supreme Governor of the world; particularly, his infinite hatred of sin, and disposition to punish it, appeared in the very act of appointing his Son to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world: For, in this act, it was manifest, that he did choose his own dear Son should himself bear the punishment of sin, rather than let it go unpunished.

cy: So the fallen angels seem to be under some kind of a reprieve; for *they are reserved in chains*, to the judgment of the great day, as condemned prisoners...II. *Peter* ii. 4. And hence, a number of them once cried out, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?*....Mat. viii. 29: Yet we are not taught, in scripture, to look upon this as a mercy to them. But the scriptures teach us to consider our reprieve....our worldly comforts ....our means of grace....our space for repentance....the restraints of providence, and the common influences of the spirit, as mercies—yea, as great mercies....*Rom.* ii. 4—*Isaiah* v. 4—*Deut.* x. 18—*Acts* xiv. 17—*Rev.* ii. 21. All these common favors, therefore, as well as special and saving mercies, were not proper to be granted to such a guilty, hell-deserving world, by a holy, sin-hating, sin-revenging God. This was not to treat mankind as it was fit and meet they should be treated: It was contrary to law that any favor at all should, without a *salvo* to the divine honor, be granted them; for, by law, they were all doomed to destruction: And it was contrary to the divine nature to do any thing in the case, that, all things considered, would have, in the least measure, a favorable aspect towards sin; or so much as in the least tend to make him seem less severe against it, than if he had damned the whole world for their apostacy and rebellion.

If God had set aside his law, which was the image of his heart, and undertaken and shown all these favors to a guilty world, without any *salvo* to his honor, his visible conduct would have been directly contrary to the inward temper of his heart; and by it he would have counteracted his nature, and misrepresented himself, dishonored his law, rendered his authority weak and contemptible, and opened a wide door for the encouragement of rebellion, throughout all his dominions—and, in effect, gotten to himself the character the devil designed to give of him to our first parents, when he said, *Ye shall not surely die*, (Gen. iii. 4)—i. e. "God is not so severe against sin as he "pretends to be, and as you think for—nor does he hate it so "much, nor will he do as he says in the case." It was therefore infinitely impossible.

(7.) *To the end, therefore, that a way might be opened for him to put his designs of mercy in execution, consistently with himself....consistently with the honor of his holiness and justice, law and government, and sacred authority, something must be done by him in a public manner, as it were, in the sight of all worlds, whereby his infinite hatred of sin, and unchangeable resolution to punish it, might be as effectually manifested as if he had damned the whole world.* MERELY his *saying* that he infinitely hates sin, and looks upon it worthy of an infinite punishment, would not have manifested the inward temper of his heart in such a meridian brightness as if he had damned the whole world *in very deed:* but rather, his *saying* one thing, and *doing* another directly contrary, would have been going counter to himself; especially, considering him as acting in the capacity of a *Governor*, to whom, by office, it belongs to put the law in execution, and cause justice to take place: For him first to make a law, threatening eternal death to the least sin, makes him appear infinitely just and holy; but then to have no regard to that law in his conduct, but go right contrary to it, without any *salvo* to his honor, is quite inconsistent, and directly tends to bring himself, his law and authority, into the greatest contempt. Something, I say, therefore, must be DONE, to make his hatred of the sin of mankind, and disposition to punish it, as manifest as if he had damned the whole world; to the end that the honor of his holiness and justice....of his law and government, and sacred authority, might be effectually secured. To act contrary to his own nature, was impossible....to have no regard to the honor of his law and government, was unreasonable—a guilty world had better all have been damned.

Thus, from the perfections of God, and from the nature of the thing, we see the necessity there was that satisfaction should be made for sin, in order to open an honorable way in which divine mercy might come out after a rebellious, guilty, hell-deserving world.

To conclude this head, the necessity of satisfaction for sin seems also to be held forth in the scriptures, and to be implied

in God's conduct in this affair. In the Old Testament, the necessity of an atonement for sin was taught in types and figures. The man that sinned was to bring his offering before the Lord, and lay his hands upon it, and confess his sin over it—and so, as it were, transfer his sin and guilt to it ; then was it to be slain, *(for death is the wages of sin)* and burnt upon the altar, (for the sinner deserves to be consumed in the fire of God's wrath), and the blood thereof was to be sprinkled round about, *(for without shedding of blood there is no remission)*—nor was there any other way of obtaining pardon prescribed but this, which naturally taught the necessity of satisfaction for sin, and led the pious Jews to some general notion of the great atonement which God would provide, and to a cordial reliance thereon for acceptance in the sight of God....*Lev.* iv, and xvi—*Heb.* ix. But, in the New Testament, the nature and necessity of satisfaction for sin, and the impossibility of finding acceptance with God, unless through the atonement of Christ, is taught in language very plain and express ; particularly in the third chapter of the epistle to the *Romans*. St. Paul having proved both *Jews* and *Greeks* to be *under sin*, and all the world *to be guilty before God*, and that *every mouth must be stopped*, in the *first* and *second chapters*; and in the beginning of the *third*, does, in the *next place*, enter upon, and begin to explain the way of salvation, by free grace, through Jesus Christ :—"We cannot," says he, "be justified by the deeds of the law, (*Chap.* iii. 20), but "it must be freely by grace through the redemption that is in "Jesus Christ, (*ver.* 24) : But if we are not justified by the "deeds of the law....by our own obedience, how will God, our "Judge, appear to be righteous ? If the law condemns us, and "yet he justifies us, i. e. if he thus proceeds contrary to law, to "clear and approve when that condemns, how will he appear "to be a just and upright Governor and Judge, who, loving "righteousness and hating iniquity, is disposed always to ren-"der to every one his due ?....Why, there is a way contrived, "wherein the righteousness of God is manifested in our justi-"fication without the law's being obeyed by us....a way unto

"which the types of the law and predictions of the prophets "did all bear witness....a way in which the righteousness of "God is manifested in and by Christ, (*ver.* 21, 22): But how? "Why, God hath *set him forth to be a propitiation, to declare* "*his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through* "*the forbearance of God—to declare, I say, at this time, his right-* "*eousness*, THAT HE MIGHT BE JUST, *and the justifier of him* "*which believeth in Jesus.*" The apostle seems evidently to suppose that God *could not have been just*, had he not thus declared his righteousness; and that he actually took this method to declare and manifest his righteousness, *to the end he might be just*....might act agreeably to his nature, the original standard of justice, and to his law, which is the transcript of his nature, and the established rule of righteousness between him our Governor, and us his subjects. He set forth his Son *to be a propitiation for the remission of sin, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier*, &c.

BESIDES, The necessity of satisfaction for sin, and that even by the death of Christ, seems to be implied in our Savior's prayer in the garden, *If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*....Mat. xxvi. 39: And again, (ver. 42.) *O, my father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done*—As if Christ had said, "If it be possible thy designs of mercy might be put into execu- "tion, and poor sinners saved, consistently with thine honor, "without my drinking this cup, O that it might be; but if it "is not possible it should be so, I consent." Satisfaction for sin being necessary, and there being no easier way in which satisfaction for sin might be made, and a door opened for mercy to come to a guilty world, consistently with the divine honor, seems to have been the very ground of the Father's willing him, and of Christ's consenting to drink that cup: And, indeed, is it possible to conceive why Christ should be willing to suffer what he did, or why his Father should desire it, were it not an expedient absolutely necessary, and nothing else would do, so that it must be, or not one of the race of Adam be ever saved,

consistently with the divine honor? If it was not so absolutely necessary—if there was some cheaper and easier way that would have done, why did the Father will this? or how had Christ a sufficient call to undertake it? or, indeed, what need was there for him to undertake? or what good would it do? If sin was not, in very deed, so bad a thing that it could not be pardoned without such a satisfaction, why was such a satisfaction insisted upon?....why a greater satisfaction than was needful? Could a holy and wise God set so light by the blood of his dear Son, as to desire it to be shed without the most urgent necessity? Or why should the Governor of the world make more ado than was necessary, and then magnify his love in giving his Son, when mankind might have been saved without it? Did this become the great Governor of the world? or would God have us look upon his conduct in such a light?...Surely no: Verily, therefore, such was the case of a rebellious, guilty world, that God looked upon them too bad to be released, consistently with the divine honor, from the threatened destruction, unless such a mediator should interpose, and such a satisfaction for sin be made; and therefore Christ acquiesced in his will, as being wise, holy, just, and good. And this being supposed, the love of God, in giving his Son, appears even such as it is represented to be—unparalleled, unspeakable, inconceivable; so, also, does the love of Christ in undertaking: And thus, from the perfections of God, and from the scriptures, and from God's conduct in this affair, it appears that a full satisfaction for sin was necessary, in order to its being pardoned, or any favor shown to a guilty world, consistently with the divine honor.

And if we, in very deed, did stand in such need, such an absolute, perishing need of a mediator, as this comes to—if God looked upon things in such a light, then must we see this our need of a mediator, and look upon things in this light too, and have a sense of this great truth upon our hearts: for, otherwise, we neither truly understand what a state we are in, nor what need we have of a mediator. And if we do not truly understand what a state we are in, nor our need of the mediator

God has provided, how can we be in a disposition to receive him as he is offered in the gospel, and truly and understandingly to rely upon him, his death and sufferings....his worth and merits....his mediation and intercession, as the gospel invites us to do ?

To see our need of Christ to be our atonement....to see our need of his propitiatory sacrifice to open the way for the Governor of the world to be reconciled to us consistently with his honor, is a very different thing from what many imagine. Some fancy they want Christ to purchase an abatement of the law, and satisfy for their imperfections; and then they hope to procure the divine favor by their own goodness. Some trust in Christ and the free grace of God through him, as they think, and yet, at the same time, look upon God as obliged, in justice, to save them, if they do as well as they can. Some, who lay not so high a claim to the divine favor, yet, by their tears and prayers, hope to move the compassions of God, and, by their fair promises, to engage his favor, and would secretly think it hard, if, after all, God should cast them off; and yet they pretend to see their need of Christ, and to trust in him: But these are all evidently so far from seeing their need of Christ, that, in the temper and exercises of their hearts, they implicitly and practically deny any need of him at all; to their own sense, they are good enough to be accepted in the sight of God, upon their own account....*Rom.* x. 3. Others, who have had great awakenings and convictions, and see much of their own badness, and do, in a sort, renounce their own righteousness....they look to be saved by free grace; but, in all the exercises of their hearts, see no need of a mediator, and have nothing to do with him: they see no reason why they may not be pitied and saved by free grace, without any respect to the atonement of Christ: They do not understand that they are so bad that it would be a reproach to the Governor of the world to show them mercy, otherwise than through a mediator. Others, again, who talk much of Christ, and of faith, and of living by faith, and cry down works, and think themselves most evangelical, yet, after all, *on-*

ly believe that Christ died for them in particular, and that they shall be saved: this is their *faith*, and this their *trusting* in Christ; whereby it is evident, they never truly saw their need of Christ, nor have they any respect to him under the proper character of a Mediator: But then do persons see their need of Christ, when, from a sense of what they are, and of what God is, they are convinced that they are too bad to be pardoned and accepted—so bad that any thing short of damnation is too good for them; so that it would be inconsistent with the divine perfections, and to the reproach of the great Governor of the world, to show them any favor without some sufficient *salvo* to his honor: Now they see their need of Christ, and are prepared to exercise *faith in his blood*, (to use the apostle's phrase...*Rom.* iii. 23,) and not till now: for men cannot be said to see their need of Christ and his atonement, unless they see *that* in their case which renders his atonement *needful;* but its being inconsistent with the divine perfections, and to the dishonor of God, to pardon sin without satisfaction, was *that* which made an atonement *needful:* Therefore sinners must see their case to be such as that it would be inconsistent with the divine perfections, and to the dishonor of God, to grant them pardon without satisfaction for their sins, in order to see their need of Christ and of his atonement. When they see their case to be such, then they begin to see things as they are—to view them in the same light that God does—to perceive upon what grounds, and for what reasons, a mediator was necessary, and why and upon what accounts they want one; and hereby a foundation is laid for them, understandingly, to have a fiduial recourse to that Mediator which God has provided, that, through him, consistently with the divine perfections, they may be received to favor: and so, from Christ, the Mediator, and from the free grace of God through him, do they take all their encouragement to come to God, in hopes of pardon and acceptance, and eternal life: And thus they look *to be justified by free grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, which is what the gospel intends and proposes

....*Rom.* iii. 24: And from an increasing sense of their unworthiness and ill deserts, they, through the course of their lives, more and more, grow up into a disposition to *live the life they live in the flesh, by faith in the Son of God*, always having respect to him as their *great high-priest*, in all their approaches to the *mercy-seat*, having *access to God by him*, who has styled himself the *door of the sheep*, and *the way to the Father*, which is the very thing the gospel proposes, and invites and encourages us unto. Heb. ix. 12....*By his own blood he entered into the holy place*, having *obtained eternal redemption for us*: Ver. 24.... *Into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us:* Heb. x. 19—22....*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us—and having an high-priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.* Rom. iii. 25....*For him hath God set forth to be a propitiation for sin, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just*, &c.

And a clear, realizing sense of these things on our hearts will lay a foundation for us to see how the gospel-way of salvation is calculated to bring much glory to God, and abase sinners in the very dust, which is that wherein the glory of the gospel very much consists....*Rom.* iii. 27—*Eph.* i. 3—12. And we shall learn to rejoice to see God alone exalted, and freely to take our proper place, and lie down in the dust, abased before the Lord forever: And indeed it is perfectly fit, in this case, that the rebel-wretch should come down, and be so far from finding fault with the great Governor of the world, and with his holy, just, and good law, that he should rejoice that God has taken such an effectual method to secure his own honor, and the honor of his law. We ought to be glad with all our hearts that the supreme Governor of the world did put on state, and stand for his honor, and the honor of his law, without the least abatement; and did insist upon it that sin should be punished....the sinner humbled, and grace glorified;—these were things of the greatest importance: and we ought to choose to be saved in such a way,

to have God honored, and ourselves humbled : And it is evident this must be the temper of every one that comes into a genuine compliance with the gospel : Thus much concerning the necessity of satisfaction for sin. But here, now, some may be ready to enquire,

Was it not as necessary that the precepts of the law should be obeyed, as that the penalty should be suffered, to make way for the sinner not only to be pardoned, but also to be received to a state of favor, and entitled to eternal life ?—To which I answer,

1. It is true, we need not only a pardon from the hands of God, the supreme Governor of the world, in whose sight, and against whom we have sinned ;—we need, I say, not only to be pardoned....delivered from condemnation....freed from the curse of the law....saved from hell ; but we want something further : We want to be renewed to God's image....taken into his family....put among his children, and made partakers of his everlasting favor and love : We need not only to be delivered from all those *evils* which are come upon us, and which we are exposed unto, through our apostacy from God ; but we want to be restored to the enjoyment of all that *good* which we should have had, had we kept the covenant of our God.

2. It is true, also, that mankind, according to the tenor of the first covenant, were not to have been confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness—were not to have had eternal life, merely upon the condition of being innocent, (for such was Adam by creation), but perfect obedience to every precept of the divine law was required....*Rom.* x. 5—*Gal.* iii. 10. The performance of such an obedience, was *that righteousness* which was, by covenant, to entitle him to life.

3. Since the fall, all mankind are destitute of *that righteousness*—nor can they attain unto it....*Rom.* iii. 9—20.

4. But our natural obligations to love God with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing, still remain : for they are, in their own nature, unalterable : They will be forever the same, so long as God remains what he is, and we are his creatures. There was the same reason, therefore, after the fall, why we

should love and obey God, as ever there was: There was the same reason, therefore, that the condition of the first covenant should be fulfilled, as ever there was: It was reasonable, originally, or God would never have insisted upon it: and therefore it is reasonable now, since our apostacy; and God has the same grounds to insist upon it forever: but we cannot perform it ourselves; it was necessary, therefore, that it should be performed by Christ, our surety. But perhaps some may still say,

When Christ had fully satisfied for all our sins, and so opened a way for believers to be considered as entirely free from any guilt, why might not the Governor of the world now, of his sovereign goodness and bounty, have bestowed eternal life, without any more to do? What need was there for Christ to fulfil all righteousness in our room?—To which I answer—

When Adam was newly created, he was innocent...free from any guilt; and why might not the supreme Governor of the world, now, without any more to do, have bestowed upon him eternal life and blessedness, of his mere sovereign goodness? What need was there that his everlasting welfare should be entirely suspended upon the uncertain condition of his good behavior? Had not God just seen how it turned out with the angels that sinned? Did he not know that Adam was liable to sin and undo himself too? And why would he run any venture a second time; especially, since the happiness, not only of Adam, but of all his race, a whole world of beings, now lay at stake? If he thinks that if but one man should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, his loss would be infinitely great, what must the everlasting welfare of a whole race be worth in his account? And would infinite wisdom and infinite goodness venture and hazard all this, *needlessly?* Yea, would such a Being have done so, had there not been reasons *of infinite weight* to move him to it—something of greater importance than the eternal welfare of all mankind? No doubt there was something; and something of very great importance, that influenced the infinitely wise and good Governor of the world to such a conduct—something so *very great*, as to render his conduct, in

that affair, perfectly holy and wise....perfectly beautiful, excellent, and glorious. It does not look like a mere arbitrary constitution. It was doubtless ordered so, because God saw it was perfectly fit, and right, and best. But why was it fit, and right, and best? Whatever the reason was, doubtless, for the same reason, it was fit, and right, and best, that the *second Adam* should perform the same condition....fulfil all righteousness, to the end that, by his obedience, we might be made righteous, and so be entitled to life in this way.

It is certain that eternal life and blessedness were not to have been given *absolutely*, i. e. without any condition at all, under the first covenant. Eternal life was not to have been granted merely under the notion of a *gift*, from a *sovereign benefactor;* but also under the notion of a *reward*, from the hands of the *moral Governor* of the world. Perfect obedience was the condition: *Do and live*....Rom. x. 5: *Disobey and die*....Gal. iii. 10. This was established by the law of the God of Heaven.

Now, the supreme Governor of the world did this for some end, or for no end:—not for no end; for that would reflect upon his wisdom. Was it for his own good, or his creatures' good?—Not for his own good; for he is self-sufficient and independent:—not for his creatures' good; for it had been better for them, their interest simply considered, to have had eternal life and blessedness given absolutely and unconditionally: for then they would have been at no uncertainties....not liable to fall into sin or misery, but secure and safe forever. It remains, therefore, that, as moral Governor of the world, he had an eye to the moral fitness of things, and so ordained, because, in itself, in its own nature, it was fit and right.

But why was it fit and right? i. e. What grounds and reasons were there, in the nature of the case, why the great Governor of the world should suspend the everlasting welfare of his creature, man, upon condition of his being in most perfect subjection to himself? i. e. Why should he so much stand upon his own honor, as to insist upon this homage, at the hazard of his creatures' everlasting welfare? i. e. Why did he look upon his

own honor as a matter of so great importance?—I answer, that, from the rectitude of the divine nature, he is perfectly impartial in all his conduct. It was not, therefore, from any thing like pride, or a selfish spirit, that he stood thus upon his honor; the homage of a worm of the dust could do him no good:—nor for want of goodness, that he set so light by his creatures' happiness; but it was fit he should do as he did—the rectitude of his nature, as it were, obliged him to it: For it becomes the Governor of the world, and it belongs to his office as such, to see to it, that every one has his proper due; and therefore it concerns him, first and above all things, to assert and maintain the rights of the GOD-HEAD: and this honor was due to God.

He was, by nature, God, and Adam was, by nature, man; he was the Creator, and Adam was his creature; he was moral Governor of the world, and Adam was his subject; he was, by right, Law-giver, and Adam was a free agent, capable of, and bound unto perfect obedience; he was Judge, to whom it belonged to distribute rewards and punishments, and Adam was an accountable creature. Now he only considered himself as being what he was, and his creature, man, as being what he was; and he was affected and acted accordingly. He considered what honor was due to him from man—what obligations man was under to give him his due—that he was capable of doing it voluntarily—that it was fit he should—that it became the Governor of the world to insist upon it—that if he did not do it with all his heart, he could not be considered as a subject fit for the divine favor, but fit only for divine wrath. He thus viewed things as they were, and acted accordingly: What he did, therefore, was perfectly right and fit. To have had no regard to his honor, but only to have consulted his creatures' welfare, would have been a conduct like theirs in Rom. i. 21, 25.... *They glorified him not as God:—They worshipped and served the creature, more than the Creator.**

* How God's putting Adam into a state of *trial* was consistent with his aiming merely at his happiness as his *last end*, I cannot understand: Sure

Now, since the second Adam becomes surety, and stands responsible to the Governor of the world, it was fit he should not only suffer the penalty of the broken law, but obey its precepts too, in order to open a door for us not only to be pardoned, but also received to favor, and entitled to eternal life. There was the same reason the *second* Adam should do it, as that the *first* should....The honor of God did as much require it: It was as needful in order to our being considered as subjects fit for the divine favor and eternal life: It became the Governor of the world as much to stand for his honor with one as with the other; and he had as good reason to suspend the everlasting welfare of mankind upon this condition now, as ever: and to have shown no concern for the divine honor, although God had been openly affronted and despised by man's apostacy, but only to have regarded and consulted the welfare of the rebel under righteous condemnation, had been a conduct evidently unbecoming the great Governor of the world.

But again, we may view the case in another point of light:—According to the first covenant, eternal life and blessedness were not to have been granted merely under the notion of a *gift*, from a *sovereign Benefactor;* but also under the notion of a *reward* from God, as *moral Governor* of the world—and perfect obedience was the condition. *Do* and *live*:—And while eternal life and blessednesss were thus promised, by way of *reward*

I am, it must have been better, unspeakably better, for Adam, his interest only considered, to have been immediately *confirmed* in a state of perfect holiness and happiness, without running such an awful venture of eternal ruin and destruction: Nor is there any man on earth that would choose, merely out of regard to his own welfare, to be put into a state of trial, rather than into a state of confirmed holiness and happiness, such as the saints in heaven are now in: and, therefore, I cannot but think that God had a greater regard to something else, than to Adam's happiness. In this instance, it seems plain, *from fact*, that God does not make his creatures' happiness his last end. It is in vain to plead, "that Adam could "not be a *moral agent*, unless he was a *free agent*—nor a *free agent* without "being *liable* to sin;" for the saints in heaven are *moral agents*, and *free agents* too, and yet are not *liable* to sin: And if God's putting his creatures into a state of trial is not consistent with his aiming merely at their happiness as his last end, then the whole tenor of God's moral government is not consistent therewith: for, from first to last, it has been his way to put his creatures into a state of trial; even all his creatures who were capable of moral government.

to *virtue*, God's infinite love thereto was hereby testified, and the temper of his heart acted out and displayed. But God infinitely loves to act like himself:—On this consideration, therefore, it was necessary that the *second* Adam should fulfil all righteousness, in the room of a guilty, unholy world, to the end that the Governor of the world might bestow grace, and glory, and all good things upon sinners, as a *reward* to Christ's *virtue*, and so hereby testify his infinite love to *virtue: And so still act like himself.* It was God's sovereign pleasure to exercise his infinite goodness towards a ruined race, and his *holy* nature prompted him to choose this way; for he always takes infinite delight in showing regard and respect to *virtue*, in his moral government of the world. He translated Enoch and Elijah.... saved Noah from the general deluge....delivered Lot out of Sodom....promised Abraham a posterity numerous as the stars of heaven, and Phineas an everlasting priesthood....and a thousand things more has he done—and all to bear a *public testimony* of his love to *virtue;—this is the thing which the King delights to honor.* The very ground of his love to himself, is the *virtue* or holiness of his nature:—In this, his divine beauty and glory primarily consists....*Isaiah* vi. 3. He loves, therefore, to put honor upon the *image* of himself; and, in doing so, he still reflects honor upon himself, the original fountain of *moral excellence:* and, therefore, according to the *first covenant*, and according to the *second*, it was equally fit that eternal life and blessedness should be given as a *reward* to *virtue*, in testimony of his regard thereto.

Thus, from the perfections of God, and the reason and nature of things, the necessity of Christ's obeying the preceptive part of the law, as well as suffering the penalty, in order to our being not only pardoned, but received to the everlasting favor of God, and entitled to eternal life, seems evident.

But, from *scripture*, the point may more easily be confirmed: For therein we are taught that he was appointed, by the Governor of the world, not only to *make reconciliation for iniquity*, but also to *bring in everlasting righteousness*....Dan. ix. 24—

And are assured that he is become *the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe*...Rom. x. 4—And that, *by his obedience, many are made righteous*....Rom. v. 19. But this work would not have been put upon him, had it been needless ; i. e. if God's honor and our salvation could both have been secured without it; for then it had been in vain :—which to suppose, reflects much upon the divine wisdom, and quite undermines and nullifies the love, and grace, and kindness of God herein to us; for we had been as well without it. With much evidence, therefore, may we conclude that it was necessary that the *second* Adam, Christ our surety, should *obey* as well as suffer in our room, in order to open a door for our justification and eternal life : And, accordingly, we may observe that the favors shown to a sinful, guilty world, on Christ's account, are, in scripture, promised under the notion of a *reward* to Christ's *virtue ;* for, upon making *his soul an offering for sin*, which was the highest *act of virtue*, it was promised that *he should see his seed....prolong his days....have the pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hands*—and that he should *see the travail of his soul*, and *justify many*.... Isaiah liii. 10, 11, 12.

Therefore, in order to a genuine compliance with the gospel by faith in Jesus Christ, we must see how far we are from *righteousness*—that all our seeming righteousness is as filthy rags—that we have nothing to recommend us to God—that there is nothing in us rendering us *fit* to be beloved by him, or *meet* to receive any favor at his hands, but every thing to the contrary, to the end we may see our need of Christ....of Christ, *to be made of God unto us, righteousness*, (I. Cor. i. 30) and our necessity of being *found in him, having on his righteousness*, (Phil. iii. 9) : for this is the design of the gospel, to bring us to look *to be accepted* with God *only in his beloved*, (Eph i. 6—I. Peter ii. 5) ; and to be *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, (Rom. iii. 24) *without the deeds of the law*, (ver. 28) ; ourselves being considered as being, in ourselves, UNGODLY....(Chap. iv. ver. 5.)

And under a sense how far we are from righteousness....that we have, after all the attainments of this life, no righteousness fit to be mentioned before God....nothing fit to recommend us to his favor, but are still, in ourselves, infinitely unworthy of his love, or the least favor from him ;—I say, under a deep, effectual sense of this, we must live all our days, to the end that we may never venture to come before God, as the Pharisee did, emboldened by our own goodness, but always as the chief of sinners, desiring to be *found only in Christ, not having on our own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith ;* and so hereby be influenced to *live the life we live in the flesh, by faith on the Son of God*, as St. Paul always did, and as the gospel would have all others do....I. *Tim.* i. 15—*Phil.* iii. 9—*Gal.* ii. 20, and iii. 11.

To conclude—Thus, we see the grounds of the necessity there was for a mediator and redeemer, to make satisfaction for sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness ; and so open an *honorable* way for mercy to come out after a rebellious, guilty world—and a way in which sinners may, with *safety*, return to God.

SECTION IV.

CONCERNING THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST, AND OF HIS SATISFACTION AND MERITS.

I proceed now to consider,

2. *What has been done to make satisfaction for sin, and to answer the demands of the preceptive part of the law ; and wherein the sufficiency of the same consists.* And,

In the *first* place, what *has been done* has been already hinted ; and it may be summed up in a few words : It comprehends all that Christ has *done* and *suffered*, in his *life* and at his *death :* For us he was born—for us he lived—for us he died : He did all *on our account*, being thereunto appointed by his Father. But because his obedience and sufferings were most eminent and remarkable, when, according to the command he had received of his Father, he laid down his life for us, and offered himself a sacrifice for our sins ; and because, with a view to

this, he *became flesh, and dwelt among us,* therefore the scriptures do more frequently attribute our redemption to what was done then. Hence, we are said to be *redeemed by his blood*..... I. Peter i. 18, 19—To be *justified by his blood*....Rom. v. 9 : And all spiritual blessings are frequently represented as the fruits and effects of his *death*....Gal. iii. 13, 14. The sacrifices of the Old Testament pointed out *this* as the great atonement: And to *this* the penmen of the New Testament seem, in a special manner, to have their eyes, as the great propitiation for sin. Thus the *first* Adam was to have yielded a perfect obedience to the divine law in every thing ; but that special prohibition, touching the tree of knowledge of good and evil, was in a peculiar manner to try him, that it might be seen whether he would be in subjection to God in every thing : So, in the garden and upon the cross, our Savior's spirit of obedience was tried and discovered, and his obedience was perfected and his sufferings completed ; and so here, in a more eminent manner, the law was honored, and justice satisfied—and so the door of mercy opened for a sinful, guilty world. But,

Secondly. As to the *sufficiency* of what has been done to answer the ends proposed, let these things be considered :

(1.) That the person undertaking, as mediator and redeemer, was of sufficient dignity and worth.

(2.) That he was sufficiently authorized to act in such a capacity.

(3.) That what he has done is perfectly suited, in its own nature, to answer all the ends proposed.

(1.) *Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and man, as to his person, was* FIT *for the mediatorial office and work.* He was of sufficient dignity and worth—being, by *nature*, GOD.... *equal with the Father....the brightness of his glory....the express image of his person*....Phil. ii.—Heb. i. He was *God*, (John i. 1,) as well as *man*, (ver. 14)—And therefore his blood was considered and valued as being *the blood of God*, (Acts xx. 28)—And hence it is called *precious blood*, (I. Peter i. 18, 19.) As to his person, he was equal with God the Father in point of

worth and dignity: and it was as much for him to obey and die in the room of a guilty world, as it would have been for *God the Father* himself. In point of dignity and worth, there was none superior to him: He was upon a level with *God the Father:* He was his *equal* and *fellow.* Zech. xiii. 7....*Awake, O sword, against the man that is my* FELLOW: He was as glorious....as honorable....as lovely: He was, therefore, fit for the office....able to answer all the ends of God, the Governor of the world—of his holiness and justice, law and government, and perfectly to secure the divine honor, viewed in every point of light. The infinite dignity of his nature, as God, made him capable of an obedience of infinite moral excellence, and capable of making a full satisfaction for the infinite evil of sin: He could magnify the law, and make it honorable in a more illustrious manner than all the angels in heaven and men on earth put together; by how much he was more excellent than they all. If the Son of God obey and die, it is enough: God and his law are forever secure. Thus, his being, by nature, GOD, rendered him of sufficient dignity for the office and work of a mediator....*Heb.* ix. 14.

And *this* it was, also, which made him capable of undertaking: As he was *God*, he was under no obligations, on his own account, to obey a law made for a creature—and he had an absolute right to himself. Every person, that is a mere creature, is under natural obligations to perfect obedience on his own account—nor is he his own to dispose of: But the *Son of God* was above a mere creature;—he was a divine person, and, previous to his undertaking, was under no obligation to obedience;—he had an original right to himself, and was not, by nature, under the law; he was, therefore, at his own disposal, and at full liberty to undertake in our room: He had power to assume human nature, and be made under the law for us, and obey for us, and suffer for us; for he might do what he would with his own....*John* x. 17, 18. The sufficiency of Christ being thus originally founded in his divinity—hence, this is the first thing the apostle to the Hebrews insists upon, in order to explain,

clear up, and confirm the safety of the way of salvation through his blood....*Heb.* i. To clear up and confirm the safety of the way of salvation, through the blood of Christ, is evidently the scope and design of that epistle, as is manifest from the ten first *Chapters ;*—particularly see *Chapter* x. *ver.* 19—22. And in order to show the safety of this way, he insists upon the excellency of his person, and the nature of his office....his being called, appointed, and authorized, and his actually going through the work of our redemption—which, together with some occasional exhortations, digressions, &c. is the substance of his discourse, from *Chap.* i. *ver.* 1, to *Chap.* x. *ver.* 23.

Thus, as GOD, he was of infinite dignity and worth—as GOD, he was at liberty to undertake. He had an estate (if I may so speak) of his own, and could pay the debt of another with what was his own, and purchase for us an inheritance : And I may add, that, as he was the *Son of God*, the *second* person in the trinity, there was a suitableness that he, rather than either of the other persons, should be appointed to this work. The *Father* sustains the character of supreme Lord and Governor.... asserts the rights of the God-head....maintains the honor of his law and government : The *Son* becomes mediator between God and man, to open a door for God to show mercy to man consistently with his honor, and for man to return to God with safety : The *Holy Spirit* is the sanctifier, to work in sinners to will and to do, and recover and bring them to repent and return to God, through Jesus Christ : Thus the gospel teaches us to believe....*Eph.* ii. 18.

He also was *made flesh, and dwelt among us*, and, for our sakes, was *made under the law,* to the end that, in our nature, he might *fulfil all righteousness*, and *bear the curse :* As he was one with the *Father*, he was fit to be betrusted with his *Father*'s honor : As he was *Immanuel*, God with us, he was fit to be betrusted with our salvation : As he was *God-man*, he was fit to be a *mediator* between God and man. His *humanity* rendered him capable to appear in *the form of a servant*, and to become *obedient unto death :* and his *divinity* rendered his obedience and suffer-

ings sufficient to answer the ends designed. This is he of whom the text speaks, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son:* He *gave* him....he appointed him to the work.... he put him into the office...he anointed him, and then he *laid on him the iniquities of us all*, and *set him forth to be a propitiation:* Which brings me to consider,

(2.) *That he was sufficiently authorized to be a mediator between God and man*....to take the place of sinners, and to obey and die in the room of a guilty world. God, the supreme Governor of the world, had sufficient power and authority to appoint the *first* Adam to be a representative for his posterity, to act in their room; and, by the same authority, he has appointed his Son, the *second* Adam, to be a second public head..... *Rom.* v. 12—19. By divine constitution, the *first* Adam was made a public person; and, by divine constitution, the *second* Adam is made such too: both receive all their authority to act in that capacity from the constitution of God. The calling, appointment, and authority of Christ, to take upon him this office and work of a mediator and high priest, is particularly treated of in the *fifth Chapter* to the *Hebrews*: He was *called of God, as was Aaron*, (ver. 4): He took not this high office upon himself, but was invested with it by his Father, (*ver.* 5): He was *called of God an high priest, after the order of Melchisedec*, (ver. 10): His Father proposed the office and the work, and he willingly undertook. *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*....Heb. x. 7. *God so loved the world, that he* GAVE *his only begotten Son*..... John iii. 16: And hence Christ says, *He did not come of himself, but was sent of his Father*....John vii. 28, 29: And that *he did not come to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him*.... John vi. 38. And his Father acknowledges him as such by a voice from heaven: Mat. xvii. 5....*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

Without such a divine constitution, the death of Christ could have been of no benefit to mankind: As, if an innocent man should offer to die in the room of a condemned criminal, and should actually lay down his life, yet it could be of no benefit to

the poor criminal, unless the civil government had authorized him so to do, i. e. unless, by some act, they had declared that his life should be accepted, in the eye of the law, instead of the criminal's. The application is easy : Thus Christ was called and put into his mediatorial office, and authorized to the work by God, the supreme Governor of the world : And hence, in allusion to the Jewish custom of *anointing* men, when advanced to some high office and important trust—(so Aaron was *anointed* priest, and David was *anointed* king,)—in allusion, I say, to this, he is called CHRIST, which is, by interpretation, the ANOINTED : Thus, as to his personal dignity, he was sufficient to undertake—and thus was he authorized to do so. And,

(3.) *What he has done is perfectly suited, in its own nature, to answer all the ends proposed :* That is, to secure the honor of God....the honor of his holiness, justice, and truth....his law, government, and sacred authority—and so open a door for the free and honorable exercise of his mercy and grace towards a sinful, guilty world, and a way in which sinners might return to God with divine acceptance. God, the supreme Governor of the world, knew upon what grounds there was need of a mediator....what ends he had to answer, and how they might be answered in the best manner. According to the counsel of his own will, in his infinite wisdom, he laid the very plan which is now revealed to us in the gospel : He appointed one to be a mediator whom he judged fit....put him into the office, and appointed him his work ;—all this work Jesus Christ has done : He has *finished the work which the Father gave him to do*..... John xvii. 4, and xix. 30—And so has been *faithful to him that appointed him*....Heb. iii. 2 : So that herefrom we might be assured, that what he has done is most perfectly suited, in its own nature, to answer all the ends proposed, although it were quite beyond us to understand *how :* But, by the help of the word and spirit of God, we may be able to enter a little way into this wonderful and glorious mystery.

It was fit the *first* Adam, as the representative and public head of mankind, should, as a condition of the everlasting love

and favor of God, have continued in a most willing and perfect subjection to God, the Governor of the world, valuing his honor and glory above all things;—this was God's due: This would have satisfied God's holiness; for holiness is satisfied when the thing which is right and fit is done:—holiness wants no more, but is then content and well-pleased; and, upon this condition, mankind might have been considered as subjects fit for the divine favor, and might have received the promised reward, to the honor of the divine holiness and goodness. Now Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has, by his Father's appointment and approbation, assumed our nature....taken Adam's place....done that which was Adam's duty in our room and stead, as another public head....obeyed the law God gave his creature—a law which he was not under, but in consequence of his undertaking to stand in our room and stead. The creature fails of paying that honor to the Governor of the world which is his due from the creature: A GOD lays aside his glory...appears in the form of a servant, and becomes obedient; and so, in the creature's stead and behalf, pays that honor to the Governor of the world which was the creature's duty: and thus the Governor of the world is considered, respected, treated, and honored, as being what he is, by man—i. e. by their representative Christ Jesus, God-man-mediator. And now, hereby, God's right to the obedience of his creatures, and their unworthiness of his favor upon any other condition, are publicly owned and acknowledged: the debt is owned, and the debt is paid by the Son of God—and so holiness is satisfied; for holiness is satisfied, when the thing that is right and fit is done: And now, this door being opened, mankind may, through Christ, be considered as subjects to whom God may show favor consistently with his honor: yea, the divine holiness may be honored by granting all favors as a reward to Christ's virtue and obedience.

Again, it was fit, if any intelligent creature should, at any time, swerve at all from the perfect will of God, that he should forever lose his favor, and fall under his everlasting displeasure, for a thing so infinitely wrong: And, in such a case, it was fit

the Governor of the world should be infinitely displeased, and publicly testify his infinite displeasure, by a punishment adequate thereto, inflicted on the sinning creature. This would satisfy justice ; for justice is satisfied, when the thing which is wrong is punished according to its desert. Hence, it was fit, when, by a constitution holy, just, and good, Adam was made a public head, to represent his race, and act not only for himself, but for all his posterity ;—it was fit, I say, that he and all his race, for his first transgression, should lose the favor, and fall under the everlasting displeasure, of the Almighty. It was fit that God should be infinitely displeased at so abominable a thing—and that, as Governor of the world, he should publicly bear testimony against it, as an infinite evil, by inflicting the infinite punishment the law threatened, i. e. by damning the whole world. This would have satisfied justice : for justice is satisfied when justice takes place—when the guilty are treated with that severity they ought to be—when sin is punished as being what it is. Now, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has, by his Father's appointment and approbation, assumed our nature....taken the place of a guilty world—and had not only Adam's first transgression, but the iniquities of us all laid upon him—and, in our room and stead, has suffered the wrath of God, the curse of the law, offering up himself a sacrifice to God for the sins of men : And hereby the infinite evil of sin, and the righteousness of the law, are publicly owned and acknowledged, and the deserved punishment voluntarily submitted unto by man, i. e. by their representative : And thus justice is satisfied ; for justice is satisfied when justice takes place : And sin is now treated as being what it is, as much as if God had damned the whole world ; and God, as Governor, appears as severe against it. And thus the righteousness of God is declared and manifested, by Christ's being set forth to be a propitiation for sin ; and he may now be just, and yet justify him that believes in Jesus.

By all this the law is magnified and made honorable. On the one hand, Were any in all God's dominions tempted to think

that the great Governor of the world had dealt too severely with man, in suspending his everlasting welfare upon the condition of perfect obedience? God practically answers, and says, "I did as well by mankind as I should desire to have been done "by myself, had I been in their case, and they in mine; for "when my Son, who is as myself, came to stand in their stead, "I required the same condition of him:" And what the Father says, the Son confirms: he practically owns the law to be holy, just, and good, and the debt to be due, and pays it most willingly to the last mite, without any objection;—which was as if he had said, "There was all the reason in the world that "the everlasting welfare of mankind should be suspended on "that condition; nor could I have desired it to have been oth-"erwise, had I myself been in their case."—On the other hand, Were any tempted to think that God had been too severe in threatening everlasting damnation for sin? Here this point is also cleared up. God the Father practically says that he did as he would have been done by, had he been in their case, and they in his; for when his Son, his second self, comes to stand in their place, he abates nothing, but appears as great an enemy to sin, in his conduct, as if he had damned the whole world: His Son also owns the sentence just: he takes the cup and drinks it off: Considering the infinite dignity of his person, his sufferings were equivalent to the eternal damnation of such worms as we.

Thus the law is magnified and made honorable; and, at the same time, the honor of God's government and sacred authority is secured: and, I may add, so is also the honor of his *truth;* for he has been *true* to his threatening, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die:* for on that very day the *second Adam* virtually laid down his life in the room and stead of a guilty world. He is the *lamb slain from the foundation of the world:* So that now there is no room left, for those who will view things impartially, to have undue thoughts of the Governor of the world; nor any thing done to expose his government to reproach, or his authority to contempt: The honor of the divine govern-

ment and authority appears as sacred and tremendous as if he had damned the whole world; and although sinners will take occasion to sin, and be encouraged in their ways, because grace abounds, yet the Governor of the world has not given the occasion. In his conduct, the whole of it considered, he appears as severe against sin as if he had damned the whole world, without any mixture of the least mercy. The infinite dignity of his Son causes those sufferings he bore in our room to be as bright a display of the divine holiness and justice, as if all the human race had, for their sin, been cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torments ascended forever and ever.

Moreover, by all this, a way is opened for the free and honorable exercise of mercy and grace towards a sinful, guilty world. It may be done consistently with the honor of God—of his holiness and justice....his law and government....his truth and sacred authority: for the honor of all these is effectually secured: It may be done to the honor of divine grace: for now it appears that God did not pity the world under a notion that they had been by him severely and hardly dealt with, nor under a notion that it would have been too severe to have proceeded against them according to law. The law is not made void, but established. No reflections are cast upon the divine government: And grace appears to be free....taking its rise, not from any thing in us, but merely from self-moving goodness, and sovereign mercy. This way of salvation is suited to set off the grace of God to advantage, and make it appear to be what it is.

Having thus finished the work assigned him, he arose from the dead....he ascended on high....he entered into the holy of holies, into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us, as our great high priest.... *Heb.* ix: And here, as God-man-mediator, he is exalted to the highest honor....has a name above every name....sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having all power in heaven and earth committed unto him, and ever lives to make intercession, and is able to save,

to the uttermost, all that come to God through him. Such is the virtue of his righteousness and blood, and such is his honor and interest in the court of heaven, and such is his faithfulness to all that believe in him, that now it is perfectly safe to return to God through him, and venture our *everlasting* ALL upon his worth and merits, mediation and intercession. Heb. iv. 16.... *Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace.*

Thus we see what necessity there was of satisfaction for sin, and that the demands of the law should be answered: And thus we see what has been done for these purposes, and its sufficiency to answer all the ends proposed. The Mediator was of sufficient dignity, as to his person....he had sufficient authority, as to his office, and he has faithfully done his work. And now the honor of God's holiness and justice, law and government, and sacred authority, is secured; and a way is opened in which he may honorably put his designs of mercy into execution, and sinners safely return unto him. And now, before I proceed to consider more particularly what way is opened, and what methods God has entered upon for the recovery of sinful, guilty creatures to himself, I shall make a few *remarks* upon what has been said.

REM. 1. *As the law is a transcript of the divine nature, so also is the gospel.* The law is holy, just, and good; and is, as it were, the image of the holiness, justice, and goodness of God; and so also is the gospel: The law insists upon God's honor from the creature, and ordains that his everlasting welfare shall be suspended upon that condition; and the gospel says amen to it: The law insists upon it that it is an infinite evil for the creature to swerve in the least from the most perfect will of God, and that it deserves an infinite punishment; and the gospel says amen to it: The law discovered also the infinite goodness of God, in its being suited to make the obedient creature perfectly happy; but the gospel still more abundantly displays the infinite goodness and wonderful free grace of God: The law was holy, just, and good, and the image of God's holiness, justice, and goodness; but the gospel is more

eminently so :—In it the holiness, justice, and goodness of God are painted more to the life, in a manner truly surprising, and beyond our comprehension—yea, to the amazement of angels, who desire to look and pry into this wonderful contrivance.... I. *Pet.* i. 12.

Here, in this glass, the glory of the Lord is to be beheld.... II. *Cor.* iii. 18. The glory of God is to be seen in *the face of Christ*....II. *Cor.* iv. 6. What has been done by him in this affair, discovers the glorious moral beauty of the divine nature. Much of God is to be seen in the moral law....it is his image : but more of God is to be seen in the gospel ; for herein his image is exhibited more to the life—more clearly and conspicuously.

The moral excellence of the moral law sufficiently evidences that it is from God : it is so much like God, that it is evident that it is from God : So the moral excellence of the gospel sufficiently evidences that it is from God : it is so much like him, that it is evident that it is from him : It is his very image—therefore it is his offspring : it is a copy of his moral perfections, and they are the original : It is so much like God, that it is perfectly to his mind ;—he is pleased with it....he delights to save sinners in this way ; and if ever this gospel becomes the power of God to our salvation, it will make us like unto God—it will transform us into his image, and we shall be pleased with this way of salvation, and delight to be saved in such a way ; a way wherein God is honored....the sinner humbled.... the law established....sin discountenanced....boasting excluded, and grace glorified.

If any man has a taste for moral excellence....a heart to account God glorious for being what he is, he cannot but see the moral excellence of the law, and love it, and conform to it ; because it is the image of God : and so he cannot but see the moral excellence of the gospel, and believe it, and love it, and comply with it ; for it is also the image of God. He that can see the moral beauty of the original, cannot but see the moral beauty of the image drawn to the life : He, there-

fore, that despises the gospel, and is an enemy to the law, even he is at enmity against God himself....*Rom.* viii. 7. Ignorance of the glory of God, and enmity against him, makes men ignorant of the glory of the law and of the gospel, and enemies to both. Did men know and *love him that begat, they would love that which is begotten of him*....I. John v. 1. *He that is of God, heareth God's words; ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God*....John viii. 47.

And therefore a genuine compliance with the gospel supposes that *he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*....II. Cor. iv. 6: And a sight and sense of the moral excellence of the gospel-way of salvation assures the heart of its divinity; and hereby a supernatural and divine assent to the truth of the gospel is begotten in the heart. And a sense of the infinite dignity of the Mediator, and that he was sent of God, and that he has finished the work which was given him to do, and so opened and consecrated a new and living way of access to God....together with a sense of the full and free invitation to sinners to return to God in this way, given in the gospel, and the free grace of God therein discovered, and his readiness to be reconciled;—a spiritual sight and sense of these things, I say, emboldens the heart of a humbled sinner to trust in Christ, and to return to God through him. Hence the apostle to the Hebrews, having gone through this subject in a doctrinal way, in the conclusion makes this practical inference:—*Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus....by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith*....Heb. x. 19—22.

Rem. 2. From what has been said, we may observe, that the necessity of satisfaction for sin, and of the preceptive part of the law being answered, takes its rise from the moral perfections of the divine nature, and the moral fitness of things;

and therefore a true idea of God, and a just sense of the moral fitness of things, will naturally lead us to see the necessity of satisfaction for sin, &c. and predispose us to understand and believe what is held forth by divine revelation to that purpose. On the other hand, where a true idea of the moral perfections of God, and the moral fitness of things, is not—but, on the contrary, very wrong notions of the divine Being, and of the true nature of things, there will naturally be an indisposition and an aversion to such principles; nor will what the gospel teaches about them be readily understood or believed: And doubtless it was this which originally led some to deny the necessity of satisfaction for sin, and others to go a step farther, to deny that Christ ever designed to make any. *John* viii. 47 ....*He that is of God, heareth God's words; ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God.*

Rem. 3. The death of Christ was not designed, at all, to take away the evil nature of sin, or its ill deserts; for sin is unalterably what it is, and cannot be made a less evil: But the death of Christ was rather, on the contrary, to acknowledge and manifest the evil nature and ill desert of sin, to the end that pardoning mercy might not make it seem to be a less evil than it really is: So that, although God may freely pardon all our sins, and entitle us to eternal life for Christ's sake, yet he does look upon us, considered merely as in ourselves, to be as much to blame as ever, and to deserve hell as much as ever; and therefore we are always to look upon ourselves so too: And hence we ought always to live under a sense of the freeness and riches of God's grace in pardoning our sins, and under a sense of our own vileness and ill desert, in ourselves, upon the account of them, although pardoned—*That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God*....Ezek. xvi. 63. But this is not the way of hypocrites: for, being once confident that their sins are pardoned, their shame, sorrow, and abasement are soon at an end: and having no fear of hell, they have

but little sense of sin : and, from the doctrine of free grace, they are emboldened, as it were, to sin upon free cost. But thus saith the Lord, *When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live ; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered ; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it*....Ezek. xxxiii. 13.

Rem. 4. Nor was the death of Christ designed to draw forth the pity of God towards a guilty world : for God could find it in his heart, of his mere goodness, without any motive from without, to give his only begotten Son to die for sinners : But this was greater goodness than it would have been to have saved mankind by an act of sovereign grace, without any mediator ;—it was a more expensive way : As, for an earthly sovereign to give his only son to die for a traitor, that the traitor might live, would be a greater act of goodness than to pardon the traitor, of mere sovereignty. It was not, therefore, because the goodness of the divine nature needed any motive to draw it forth into exercise, that Jesus Christ obeyed, and died in our room ; but it was to answer the ends of moral government, and to secure the honor of the moral Governor ; and so open a way for the honorable exercise of the divine goodness, which, in its own nature, is infinite, free, and self-moving, and wants no motive from without to draw it forth into action : And the same, no doubt, may be said of Christ's *intercession in heaven.* We are, therefore, in our approaches to God, not to look to Christ to persuade the Father to pity and pardon us, as though he was not willing to show mercy of his own accord ; but we are to look to Christ, and go to God through him, for all we want, under a sense that we are, in ourselves, too bad to be pitied without some sufficient *salvo* to the divine honor, or to have any mercy shown us : And, therefore, when we look to be justified by *free grace*, it must be only through the *redemption* that is in Jesus Christ ; who has been *set forth to be a propitiation for sin, to declare God's righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*....Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.

REM. 5. Some of the peculiar principles of the *Antinomians* seem to take their rise from wrong notions of the nature of satisfaction for sin. They seem to have no right notions of the moral perfections of God, and of the natural obligations we are under to him, nor any right apprehensions of the nature and ends of moral government, nor any ideas of the grounds, nature, and ends of satisfaction for sin; (a right sense of which things tends powerfully to promote a holy fear and reverential awe of the dread Majesty of heaven and earth....a sense of the infinite evil of sin....brokenness of heart....tenderness of conscience.... a humble, holy, watchful, prayerful temper and life, as well as to prepare the way for faith in the blood of Christ.) But they seem to have no right apprehensions of these things: They seem to consider God *merely* under the notion of a *creditor*, and us *merely* under the notion of *debtors;* and to suppose, when Christ, upon the cross, said, *It is finished*, he then paid the whole debt of the elect, and saw the book crossed, whereby all their sins were *actually* blotted out and forgiven: and now, all that remains is for the holy spirit immediately to reveal it to one and another that he is elected—that for him Christ died, and that his sins are all pardoned; which revelation he is firmly to believe, and never again to doubt of: and this they call *faith*. From which it seems they understand nothing rightly about God or Christ....the law or gospel: for nothing is more evident than that God is, in scripture, considered as *righteous Governor* of the world, and we as *criminals*, guilty before him; and the evident design of Christ's death was, to be a *propitiation for sin*, to declare and manifest God's righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus...*Rom.* iii. 9—26: And the gospel knows nothing about a sinner's being justified in any other way than *by faith*, and by consequence, in order of nature, not till *after faith*. The gospel knows nothing about satisfaction for sin, in their sense; but every where teaches that the *elect*, as well as others, are equally *under condemnation* and the *wrath of God*...yea, are *children of wrath* while unbelievers....*John* iii. 18, 36—*Eph.* ii. 3—*Acts* iii. 19.

Again—while they consider God *merely* under the character of a *creditor*, and us *merely* as *debtors*, and Christ as paying the *whole debt* of the elect....now, because Christ obeyed the law, as well as suffered its penalty, therefore they seem to think that Christ has done all *their duty*, so that now they have nothing to do but firmly to *believe* that Christ has done *all:* they have nothing to do with the *law*—no, not so much as to be their rule to live by; but are set at full liberty from all obligations to *any duty* whatsoever;—not understanding that *Christ gave himself to redeem his people from all iniquity, and purify them to himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works,* (Tit. ii. 14.)—and not understanding that our natural obligations to perfect obedience are not capable of being dissolved, (*Mat.* v. 17.)—and not understanding that our obligations to all holy living are mightily increased by the grace of the gospel, (*Rom.* xii. 1.): Indeed, they seem to understand nothing rightly, but to view every thing in a wrong light; and, instead of considering Christ as a friend to holiness—as one *that loves righteousness and hates iniquity*, (Heb. i. 9.) they make him *a minister of sin*, (Gal. ii. 17.) and turn the grace of God into wantonness: All their notions tend to render their consciences insensible of the evil of sin—to cherish spiritual pride and carnal security, and to open a door to all ungodliness.

SECTION V.

SHOWING A DOOR OF MERCY IS OPENED BY JESUS CHRIST FOR A GUILTY WORLD.

I come now to another thing proposed, *viz.*

III. To show more particularly *what way to life has been opened, by what Christ, our Mediator, has done and suffered.*

In general, from what has been said, we may see that the mighty bar which lay in the way of mercy is removed by Jesus Christ; and now a door is opened, and a way provided, wherein the great Governor of the world may, consistently with the honor of his holiness and justice...his law and government, and sacred authority, and to the glory of his grace, put in execution all his designs of mercy towards a sinful, guilty, undone world.—But to be more particular,

(1.) *A way is opened, wherein the great Governor of the world may, consistently with his honor, and to the glory of his grace, pardon, and receive to favor, and entitle to eternal life, all and every one of the human race, who shall cordially fall in with the gospel-design...believe in Christ, and return home to God through him.*

What Christ has done is, in fact, *sufficient* to open a door for God, through him, to become *reconcileable* to the whole world. The *sufferings* of Christ, all things considered, have as much displayed God's hatred of sin, and as much secured the honor of his law, as if the whole world had been damned—as none will deny, who believe the infinite dignity of his divine nature. God may now, therefore, through Jesus Christ, stand ready to pardon the whole world:—There is nothing in the way. And the *obedience* of Christ has brought as much honor to God, and to his law, as the perfect obedience of Adam, and of all his race, would have done: the rights of the God-head are as much asserted and maintained: So that there is nothing in the way, but that mankind may, through Christ, be received into full favor, and entitled to eternal life. God may stand ready to do it, consistenly with his honor. What Christ has done is every way sufficient. Mat. xxii. 4....*All things are now ready.*

And God has expressly declared that it was the *design* of Christ's death, to open this door of mercy to *all*—John iii. 16 ....*God so loved the* WORLD, *that he gave his only begotten Son, that* WHOSOEVER *believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*—That *whosoever*, of *all mankind*, whether Jew or Greek, bond or free, rich or poor, without any exception, though the chief of sinners, *that believes, should be saved;* For this *end*, God gave his only begotten Son. *He set him forth to be a propitiation for sin, that he might be just, and the justifier of him* (without any exception, let *him* be who he will,) *that believeth in Jesus*....Rom. iii. 25, 26.

Hence, the apostles received an universal commission. Mat. xxviii. 19....*Go, teach* ALL NATIONS. Mark xvi. 15, 16....*Go ye into* ALL *the world, and preach the gospel to* EVERY CREA-

TURE. Accordingly, the apostles proclaimed the news of pardon and peace to *every one*—offered mercy to *all* without exception, and invited *all* without distinction. *He that believeth shall be saved....Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out*, were declarations they made to all in general. To the Jewish nation they were sent to say, in the name of the King of heaven, *I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage*....Mat. xxii. 4. And as to the Gentile nations, their orders ran thus:—*Go ye, therefore, into the high-ways, and as many as ye find, bid to the marriage*, (ver. 9.) To the Jewish nation God had been used to send his servants the prophets, in the days of old, saying, *Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die?*.... Ezek. xxxiii. 11. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come*....Isa. lv. 1. *Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live*, (ver. 3): And now orders are given that the whole world be invited to a reconciliation to God through Christ: *Whosoever will, let him come....and he that cometh shall in no wise be cast out.* Thus, Christ has opened a door; and thus, the great Governor of the world may, consistently with his honor, be reconciled to any that believe and repent: And thus he actually stands ready.

And now, *all things* being thus *ready* on God's side, and the offers, invitations, and calls of the gospel being to every one, without exception; hence, it is attributed to sinners themselves that they perish at last—even to their own voluntary conduct. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life*....John v. 40: and they are considered as being perfectly inexcusable. John xv. 22....*Now they have no cloak for their sin:* And all because a way is opened, in which they might be delivered from condemnation; but they will not comply therewith. John iii. 19... *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil:* And therefore, in scripture-account, they stand exposed to a more aggravated punishment in the world to come. Mat. xi. 20—24....*Woe unto thee*, Chorazin, *woe unto thee*, Bethsaida,

&c.—*And thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell*, &c. *It shall be more tolerable for Tyre, and Sidon, and Sodom, in the day of judgment*, than for these cities; *because they repented not.*

And now, because the door of mercy is thus opened to the *whole world* by the blood of Christ, therefore, in scripture, he is called *the Savior of the* WORLD....I. John iv. 14—*The Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the* WORLD....John i. 29—*A propitiation for the sins of the* WHOLE WORLD....I. John ii. 2—*That gave himself a ransom for* ALL....I. Tim. ii. 6—And *tasted death for* EVERY MAN....Heb. ii. 9: The plain sense of all which expressions may, I think, without any danger of mistake, be learnt from John iii. 16....*God so loved the* WORLD, *that he gave his only begotten Son, that* WHOSOEVER *believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** And indeed, was not the door of mercy opened to *all*, indefinitely, how could God *sincerely* offer mercy to *all?* Or *heartily* invite *all?* Or *justly* blame those who do not accept? Or *righteously* punish them for *neglecting so great salvation?*

Besides, if Christ died merely for the *elect*, that is, to the intent that they, only upon believing, might, consistently with the divine honor, be received to favor, then God could not, consistently with his justice, save any besides, if they should believe: *For without shedding of blood, there can be no remission*....Heb. ix. 22. If Christ did not design, by his death, to open a door for all to be saved conditionally, i. e. upon the condition of faith, then there is no such door opened: the door is not opened wider than Christ designed it should be;—there is nothing

* "I am ready to profess," says the famous Doctor TWISSE, "and that, "I suppose, as out of the mouths of all our divines, that every one who "hears the gospel, (without distinction between elect or reprobate) is bound "to believe that Christ died for him, so far as to procure both the pardon "of his sins, and the salvation of his soul, in case he believes and repents." Again, "As *Peter* could not have been saved, unless he had believed and "repented, so *Judas* might have been saved, if he had done so." Again, "*John* iii. 16, gives a fair light of exposition to those places where Christ "is said to have *died for the sins of the world*—yea, *of the whole world*, to wit, "in this manner;—that *whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but "have everlasting life.*"—Dr. TWISSE, on *the riches of God's love to the vessels of mercy*, &c.

more purchased by his death than he intended: if this benefit was not intended, then it is not procured;—if it be not procured, then the non-elect cannot any of them be saved, consistently with divine justice: And, by consequence, if this be the case, then—(1.) *The non-elect have no right at all to take any the least encouragement, from the death of Christ or the invitations of the gospel, to return to God through Christ, in hopes of acceptance:* for there are no grounds of encouragement given. Christ did not die for them in any sense. It is impossible their sins should be pardoned, consistently with justice;—as much impossible as if there had never been a Savior...as if Christ had never died; and so there is no encouragement at all for them: and therefore it would be presumption in them to take any;—all which is apparently contrary to the whole tenor of the gospel, which every where invites all, and gives equal encouragement to all:—*Come, for all things are ready*, said Christ to the reprobate Jews....*Mat.* xxii. 4: And if the non-elect have no right to take any encouragement from the death of Christ, and the invitations of the gospel, to return to God through him, in hopes of acceptance, then—(2.) *No man at all can rationally take any encouragement until he knows that he is elected;* because, until then, he cannot know that there is any ground for encouragement. It is not rational to take encouragement before we see sufficient grounds for it; yea, it is presumption to do so: But no man can see sufficient grounds of encouragement to trust in Christ, and to return to God through him, in hopes of acceptance, unless he sees that God may, through Christ, consistently with his honor, accept and save him, and is willing so to do. If God can, and is actually willing to save any that comes, then there is no objection: I may come, and any may come —*all things are ready....there is bread enough, and to spare:* But if God is reconcileable only to the elect, then I may not come....I dare not come....it would be presumption to come, till I know that I am elected. And how can I know that?... Why, not by any thing in all the Bible. While an unbeliever, it is impossible I should know it by any thing in scripture:

It is no where said, in express words, that I, by name, am elected, and there are no rules of trial laid down in such a case: And how can I, therefore, in this case, ever know that I am elected, but by an immediate revelation from heaven? And how shall I know that this revelation is true? How shall I dare to venture my soul upon it?....The gospel does not teach me to look for any such revelation, nor give any marks whereby I may know when it is from God, and when from the devil: Thus, an invincible bar is laid in my way to life: I must know that I am one of the elect, before I can see any encouragement to believe in Christ; because none but the elect have any more business to do so than the devils: but, if I am one of the elect, yet it is impossible I should know it till afterwards: Besides, all this is contrary to the whole tenor of the gospel—*Whosoever will, let him come....Whosoever comes, shall in no wise be cast out....Whosoever believes, shall be saved*—And contrary to the experience of all true believers, who, in their first return to God through Christ, always take all their encouragement from the gospel, and lay the weight of their souls upon the truth of that; and venture their eternal *all* upon this bottom, and not upon the truth of any new revelation: They venture their all upon the truths already revealed in the gospel, and not upon the truth of any proposition not revealed there.

So that, let us view this point in what light we will, nothing is more clear and certain than that Christ died, *that* WHOSOEVER *believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* And God may now *be just*, and yet *justify* any of the race of Adam that believe in Jesus: and he stands ready to do so.—And these things being true, the servants, upon good grounds, might, in their master's name, tell the obstinate Jews, who did not belong to the election of grace, and who finally refused to hearken to the calls of the gospel, *Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage*....Mat. xxii. 4: And if they had come, they would have been heartily welcome: the provision made was sufficient, and the invitation sincere: Jesus wept over

them, saying, *O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace!* So that there was nothing to hinder, had they but been willing. But it seems they were otherwise disposed; and therefore *they made light of it, and went their ways...one to his farm, another to his merchandise; and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them*, (ver. 5, 6.) And in this glass we may see the very nature of all mankind, and how all would actually do if not prevented by divine grace: Justly, therefore, at the day of judgment, will *this be the condemnation, that light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light:* For certainly, if mankind are so perversely bad, that, notwithstanding their natural obligations to God, and the unreasonableness of their original apostacy, they will yet persist in their rebellion—and, after all the glorious provision and kind invitations of the gospel, will not return to God through Christ;—I say, certainly, God is not obliged to come out after them, and, by his all-conquering grace, irresistibly reclaim them; but may justly let every man take his own course, and run his own ruin: And an aggravated damnation will every such person deserve in the coming world, *for neglecting so great salvation*....Heb. ii. 2, 3.

And now, if Christ's atonement and merits be thus sufficient for all...and if God stands ready to be reconciled to all...and if all are invited to return and come—hence, then, we may learn that it is safe for any of the poor, sinful, guilty, lost, undone race of Adam to return to God in this way: They shall surely find acceptance with God: they may come *without money, and without price; and he that cometh shall in no wise be cast out.*

And hence we may see upon what grounds it is, that the poor, convinced, humbled sinner is encouraged and emboldened to venture his *all* upon Christ, and return to God through him. It is because any poor, sinful, guilty, hell-deserving wretch may come—any in the world—the worst in the world—the vilest, and most odious and despicable: for such he actually takes himself to be. And if he did not see that there was an open door for such....for any such....for all such, he

would doubt, and that with good reason too, whether he might safely come. But when he understands and believes the gospel-revelation, and so is assured that it is safe for any....for all ....the vilest and the worst, now the peculiar vileness and unworthiness which he sees in himself ceases to be an objection: He sees it safe for any, and therefore for him—and hence takes courage, and is emboldened to venture his *all* upon the free grace of God, through Jesus Christ; and so returns, in hopes of acceptance. Now, does this poor sinner venture upon a safe foundation, or does he not? He takes it for granted that the supreme Governor of the world can, consistently with his honor, show mercy to any that come to him through Christ; and he takes it for granted that he stands ready to do so, even to the vilest and worst....that the door of mercy stands wide open, and *whosoever will, may come:* And, upon these principles, he takes encouragement to return to God, in hopes of acceptance: and, from a sense of his own wants, and of the glory and all-sufficiency of the divine nature....of the blessedness there is in being the Lord's, devoted to him, and living upon him, he does return with all his heart; and to God he gives himself, to be forever his: and if the gospel be true, surely he must be safe. The *truth of the gospel* is the foundation of all; for upon that, and that only, he builds: not upon works of righteousness which he has done—not upon any immediate revelation of pardon, or the love of Christ to him in particular; but merely upon gospel-principles. If they, therefore, prove true, in the coming world, then will he receive the end of his faith—the salvation of his soul. But to return,

Thus we see that, by the death of Christ, there is a wide door opened for divine mercy to exercise and display itself: the supreme Governor of the world may, consistently with his honor, now seat himself upon a throne of grace, and proclaim the news of pardon and peace through a guilty world; and it is perfectly safe for any of the guilty race of Adam to return unto him through Jesus Christ. And now, were mankind in a disposition to be heartily sorry for their apostacy from God,

and disposed to esteem it their indispensable duty, and highest blessedness, to return ; were this the case, the joyful news of a Savior, and of pardon and peace through him, would fly through the world like lightning, and every heart would be melted with love, and sorrow, and gratitude ; and all the nations of the earth would come, and fall down in the dust before the Lord, and bless his holy name, and devote themselves to him forever, lamenting, in the bitterness of their hearts, that ever they did break away from their subjection to such a God. And were mankind sensible of their sinful, guilty, undone state by LAW, and disposed to justify the law, and condemn themselves —and were they sensible of the holiness and justice of the great Governor of the world, they would soon see their need of such a mediator as Christ Jesus, and soon see the wonderful grace of the gospel, and soon see the glory of this way of salvation, and so know it to be from God, believe it, and fall in with it ; and all the world would repent and convert of their own accord —and so all the world might be saved without any more to do. But, instead of this, such is the temper of mankind, that there is not one in the world, that, of his own accord, is disposed to have any such regard to God, or sorrow for his apostacy, or inclination to repent and return ; nor do men once imagine that they are in a state so wretched and undone, and stand in such a perishing need of Christ and free grace ; and therefore they are ready to make light of the glad tidings of the gospel, and go their ways...one to his farm, another to his merchandise : nor is there one of all the human race disposed, of his own accord, to lay down the weapons of his rebellion, and return to God by Jesus Christ : So that all will come to nothing, and not one be ever brought home to God, unless something farther be done— unless some methods, and methods very effectual, be used.

But that God should come out after such an apostate race, who, without any grounds, have turned enemies to him, and, without any reason, refuse to be reconciled....and that after all the glorious provision and kind invitations of the gospel ;—that God, I say, should come out after such, and reclaim them by

his own sovereign and all-conquering grace, might seem to be going counter to the holiness and justice of his nature, and to tend to expose his law and government, and sacred authority, to contempt; in as much as they so eminently deserve to be consumed by the fire of his wrath. Therefore,

(2.) *Jesus Christ did, by his obedience and death, open such a door of mercy, as that the supreme Governor of the world might, consistently with his honor, take what methods he pleased, in order to recover rebellious, guilty, stubborn sinners to himself.*

That he might take *what methods he pleased*, I say—for he knew, from the days of eternity, how mankind would be disposed to treat him, his Son, and his grace; and he knew, from eternity, what methods he *intended* to take to reclaim them: and these are the methods which he now *pleases* to take—and the methods....yea, the *only* methods which he *actually does take:* So that it is the same thing, in effect, to say that, by what Christ has done and suffered, a door is opened for the MOST HIGH, consistently with his honor, to take—1. What methods he *actually does take*, or—2. What methods he *pleases*, or—3. What methods he, *from eternity*, *intended:* For all amount to just one and the same thing: for what pleased him from eternity, the same pleases him now; and what pleases him now, that he actually does. The infinite perfection of his nature does not admit of any new apprehension, or alteration of judgment. By his infinite understanding he always had, and has, and will have, a complete view of all things, past, present, and to come, at once: And by his infinite wisdom, and the perfect rectitude of his nature, he unchangeably sees and determines upon that conduct which is right, and fit, and best: For with him *there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning*...James i. 17.

Now, that what Christ has done and suffered, was *sufficient* to open a way for the honorable exercise of his sovereign grace, in recovering sinners to himself, is evident, from what has been heretofore observed: And that it was *designed* for this end, and has, in fact, effectually answered it, is plain, from God's conduct in the affair: for otherwise he could not, consistently

with his honor, or the honor of his law, use those means to reclaim sinners, which he actually does: For all those methods of grace would else be contrary to LAW, which does not allow the sinner to have any favor shown him, without a sufficient security to the divine honor, as has been before proved. The law, therefore, has been satisfied in this respect, or these favors could not be shown: for heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than the law be disregarded in any one point. It follows, therefore, that not only special and saving grace, but also that all the common favors which mankind in general enjoy, and that all the means of grace which are common to the elect and non-elect, are the effects of Christ's merits: All were purchased by him; none of these things could have been granted to mankind, but for him. Christ has opened the door, and an infinite sovereign goodness has strewed these common mercies round the world. All those particulars wherein mankind are treated better than the damned in hell, are over and above what mere LAW would allow of, and therefore are the effects of Christ's merits and gospel-grace. And for this, among other reasons, Christ is called *the Savior of the world:* And hence, also, God is said to be *reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*....II. Cor. v. 19: Because, for the present, their punishment is suspended, and they are treated in a way of mercy....are invited to repentance, and have the offers of pardon and peace, and eternal life made unto them;—hence, I say, God is said *not to impute their sins unto them*—agreeably with that parallel place in *Psalm* lxxviii. 38, where God is said *to forgive the iniquity* of his people, because he *destroyed them not.*

Upon the whole, then, this seems to be the true state of the case:—God is, through Christ, ready to be reconciled to all and every one that will repent and return unto him through Jesus Christ: He sends the news of pardon and peace around a guilty world, and invites every one to come, saying, *He that believeth, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned:* and, on this account, it is said that *he will have all*

men to be saved, and *is not willing that any should perish ;* because he offers salvation to all, and uses arguments to dissuade them from perdition. But, in as much as mankind will not hearken, but are obstinately set in their way, therefore he takes state upon himself, and says, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy :* and a sinful, guilty world are in his hands, and he may use what methods of grace with all that he pleases : Some he may suffer to take their own way, and run their own ruin, if he pleases—and others he may subdue and recover to himself, by his own all-conquering grace: And, unto a certain number, from eternity, he intended to show this special mercy: and these are said to be *given to Christ*, (John vi. 37.) And with a special eye to these *sheep* did he *lay down his life*, (John x. 15.)—his Father intending, and he intending, that they, in spite of all opposition, should be brought to eternal life at last: and hence *the elect do* always *obtain*, (Rom. xi. 7, compared with John vi. 37.) And here we may learn how to understand those places of scripture which seem to limit Christ's undertaking to a certain number. Mat. i. 21....*Thou shalt call his name* JESUS ; *because he shall save* HIS PEOPLE *from their sins.*—Eph. v. 23....*He is the head of the* CHURCH ; *and he is the Savior of the* BODY.—Ver. 25.... *Christ loved the* CHURCH, *and gave himself* FOR IT.—Acts xx. 28....*He hath purchased his* CHURCH *with his own blood.*—John x. 15....*I lay down my life for the* SHEEP.—There were a certain number which the Father and Son, from all eternity, designed for *vessels of mercy*, to bring to glory....*Rom.* ix. 23.—With a view to these, it was promised in the covenant of redemption that Christ should *see of the travail of his soul*....Isai. liii. 11.—And Christ says, in John vi. 37, 38, 39, *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out....For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me....And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*—See, also, Tit. ii. 14—Rev. v. 9, 10—Eph. i. 4, 5, 6.

Thus Christ's merits are sufficient for all the world, and the door of mercy is opened wide enough for all the world; and God, the supreme Governor, has proclaimed himself reconcileable to all the world, if they will believe and repent: And if they will not believe and repent, he is at liberty to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and to show compassion to whom he will show compassion...according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace. He sits SOVEREIGN, and a rebellious, guilty world are in his hands, and at his disposal; and the thing that seems good in his sight, that he will do: and it is infinitely fit, right, and best he should...that the pride of all flesh may be brought low, and the Lord alone be exalted forever. And as this view of things seems exactly to harmonize with the whole tenor of the gospel in *general*, and to agree with the various *particular* representations of our redemption by Christ—and to reconcile those texts which seem to speak of an *universal redemption*, with those which seem to speak of a *particular redemption*, so it will naturally suggest an easy answer to any objections which may be made against it.

OBJ. 1. *If Christ has suffered the penalty of the law, not only for the elect, but also for the non-elect, how can it be just that they themselves should be made to suffer it over again forever in hell?*

ANS. Because Christ did not die with a design to release them from their deserved punishment, but only upon condition of faith; and so they have no right to the release, but upon that condition: It is as just, therefore, they should be punished as if Christ had never died, since they continue obstinate to the last; and it is just, too, they should have an aggravated damnation, for refusing to return to God, despising the offers of mercy, and neglecting so great salvation....*John* iii. 16—19.

OBJ. 2. *If Christ obeyed the preceptive part of the law, not only for the elect, but also for the non-elect, why are not all brought to eternal life, since eternal life is by law promised to perfect obedience?*

ANS. Because Christ did not purchase eternal life for them, but upon the condition of faith: But they would not come to

Christ, that they might have life ; and therefore they justly perish....*John* iii. 16—19.

Obj. 3. *But for what purpose did Christ die for those who were in hell a long time before his death?*

Ans. And to what purpose did he die for those who were in heaven a long time before his death?...The truth is, that when Christ laid down his life a ransom for all, he only accomplished what he undertook at the beginning. Christ actually interposed as Mediator immediately upon the fall of man, and undertook to secure the divine honor, by obeying and suffering in the room of a guilty world ; and therefore, through him, God did offer mercy to Cain as well as to Abel, and show common favors to the world in general, as well as grant special grace to the elect ; and that before his death, as well as since. Surely none will deny that all the favors which mankind did enjoy prior to Christ's death, were by virtue of his undertaking to be Mediator, and engaging to secure the divine honor : for, upon any other footing, the Governor of the world could not have granted such favors consistently with his honor.

Obj. 4. *But if Christ died for all, then he died in vain, since all are not saved.*

Ans. The next and immediate end of Christ's death was to answer the ends of moral government, and so secure the honor of the moral Governor, and open a way in which he might honorably declare himself reconcileable to a guilty world upon their returning through Christ, and use means to reclaim them ; but this end Christ did obtain—and so did not die in vain.... *John* iii. 16—*Rom.* iii. 24, 25, 26. And the supreme Governor of the world will now, through Christ, accomplish all the designs of his heart, to the everlasting honor of his great name.

Obj. 5. *But why would God have a door opened, that he might, consistently with his honor, offer to be reconciled to all that will return to him through Christ, when he knew that the non-elect would never return? And why would he have a door opened that he might use means with them, when he knew all would be*

in vain, unless he himself recovered them by his all-conquering grace, which yet he never designed to do?

Ans. God designed to put an apostate world into a new state of probation. Mankind were in a state of probation in Adam, their public head, and we all sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression: But God designed to try the posterity of Adam anew, and see whether they would be sorry for their apostacy, or choose to continue in their rebellion. He would tender mercy, and offer to be reconciled, and call them to return, and use arguments and motives, and promise and threaten, and try and see what they would do. He knew mankind would be ready to deny their apostacy, and plead that they were not enemies to God, and think themselves very good-natured—and would take it exceedingly hard not to be believed: therefore he determined to try them, and see what they would do, and make public declaration through the world, that, finally, he would judge every man according to his works, and deal with him according to his conduct: And, in the mean time, that his honor might be secured, he appoints his Son to be Mediator; and so, through him, proclaims the news of pardon and peace, and enters upon the use of means: and now, if you ask me "Why does he do all this, when he "knows it will be in vain, as to the *non-elect*, who will never "come to repentance?"—

I answer—His knowing that all will, in the event, prove ineffectual to bring them to repentance, is no objection against his using the means he does: for God does not make his foreknowledge of events the rule of his conduct; but the reason and fitness of things. You may as well inquire, "Why did "God raise up Noah to be a *preacher of righteousness* to the "old world, for the space of an hundred and twenty years, when "he knew they would never come to repentance?—And why "did he send all his servants, the prophets, to the children of "Israel, rising early and sending, and, by them, command and "call...entreat and expostulate...promise and threaten, and say, "*As I live, saith the Lord God, I delight not in the death of a*

"*sinner: turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die!* when he knew "they would never come to repentance?—And why did he af- "terwards send his Son to the same obstinate people, when he "knew they would be so far from hearkening, as that they "would rather put him to death?"—Now, if you ask me why the great Governor of the world uses such means with the non-elect, and shows so much goodness, patience, forbearance, and long-suffering, instead of sending all immediately to deserved destruction?—*I answer*, it is to try them; and to show that he is *the Lord God, gracious and merciful....slow to anger, and abundant in goodness.* It is fit that creatures in a state of probation should be tried, and he loves to act like himself; and he means, in and by his conduct, to do both at once: And after obstinate sinners have long abused that *goodness* and *forbearance*, which *should have led them to repentance*—and have, *after their own hard and impenitent hearts, been treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath*, the righteousness of God's judgment, in their eternal destruction, will be most manifest. And what if God was determined not to reclaim rebels, voluntarily so obstinate, by his all-conquering grace, but let them take their course, seeing they were so set in their way? What then?... Was he not at liberty? Was he bound to save them all by an exertion of his omnipotence? Might he not *have mercy on whom he would?* And, after *such long-suffering*, might he not *show his wrath, and make his power known*, in the eternal destruction of those who so justly deserved it? God's last end, no doubt, is to manifest his perfections: and in and by his whole conduct towards a fallen world, they will all be most illustriously displayed....*Rom.* xi. 36.

OBJ. 6. *But considering that the non-elect are, after all, under an absolute impossibility to believe and repent, convert and be saved....and considering that all common mercies, and means of grace, will only render them the more inexcusable in the end, and so aggravate their guilt and damnation—therefore, all things considered, what seeming good they enjoy in this world, is not of the nature of a* MERCY: *it would be better for them to be*

without it: Sodom *and* Gomorrah *will be better of it in the day of judgment, than* Chorazin *and* Bethsaida:* *and therefore there is no need to suppose that any thing which the non-elect enjoy in this world, is the effect of Christ's merits, but only of divine sovereignty.*

Ans. What do you mean by being *under an absolute impossibility to believe and repent...convert and be saved?* Using words without determinate ideas is one principal thing which bewilders the world about matters of religion: Now, in plain English, *all things are ready*....and they are invited to *come*....and there is nothing in the way of their being saved: but, they are not sorry for their apostacy from God, nor will be brought to it by all the means God uses with them: They have not a mind to return to God, nor will they be persuaded by all the most powerful arguments that can be used: they are volutary enemies to God, and will not be reconciled, unless by an almighty power and all-conquering grace, which God is not obliged to give, and they are infinitely unworthy of....and without which they might return, were they but of such a temper as they ought to be: they are under no inability but what consists in and results from their want of a good temper of mind, and their voluntary obstinacy. Sin has no power over men, but as they are *inclined* to it; and the inclinations of the heart are always voluntary and unforced. Men *love* to be inclined as they are; for otherwise their inclinations would be so far from having any power over them, that they would even cease to be.—Now certainly the bringing up of the children of Israel out of Egypt was of the nature of a *mercy*, and a great mercy too indeed it was, notwithstanding that, through their unbelief and perverseness, they never got to Canaan: The thing, in itself, was as great a mer-

* It may be proper just to hint the gross absurdities implied in this objection. If the non-elect were under an absolute (i. e. not only a moral, but natural) impossibility to turn to God, they would not be proper subjects to use any means with: And if their common favors, and means of grace were not of the nature of *mercies*, they could not aggravate their guilt: And if it was not their own fault that they did not repent under the enjoyment of means, they would not be to blame, nor deserve to be punished for not repenting. Men stumble into such absurdities by using words without determinate ideas.

cy to the body of that generation, as it was to Caleb and Joshua: and their bad temper and bad conduct, which prevented their ever coming to the promised land, did not alter the nature of the thing at all, nor lessen their obligations to gratitude to God, their mighty deliverer: And yet, all things considered, it had been better for them to have died in their Egyptian bondage, than to have had their carcases fall in the wilderness, in such an awful manner. And besides, it is evident that the scriptures do look upon the common favors, and means of grace, which the non-elect enjoy, under the notion of *mercies*; and (which otherwise could not be) on this very ground their guilt is aggravated, and they rendered inexcusable, and worthy of a more sore punishment in the world to come....*John* iii. 16—19, and xv. 22, 24—*Rom.* ii. 4, 5—*Heb.* ii. 2, 3. And if they are of the nature of mercies, then they are the effects of Christ's merits —as has been already proved.

And hence, by the way, we may see the reason why the *love* and *goodness* of God, in bringing up the children of Israel out of Egypt, is so mightily set forth in the Old Testament, notwithstanding the body of that generation perished in the wilderness—and why the *love* and *goodness* of God, in giving his Son to die for the world, is so mightily set forth in the New Testament, notwithstanding multitudes of mankind perish forever: viz. It was the Israelites' own fault that they perished in the wilderness, and so it is sinners' own fault that they perish forever....*John* iii. 19, and v. 40: And did they feel it at heart, it would effectually stop their mouths: for this is an undoubted maxim, that the kindnesses of God to a rebellious, perverse world, are not, in themselves, any the less *mercies*, because mankind abuse them to their greater ruin. The kindnesses are, in themselves, the same, whether we make a good improvement of them, or no: They are just the same, and so just as great, let our conduct be what it will. It was a great mercy to the Israelites to be delivered out of Egypt—it was a wonderful expression of divine goodness: and hence it is said, in Hos. xi. 1....*When Israel was a child, then I* LOVED *him, and*

called my Son out of Egypt. (And a like expression we have in Deut. x. 18....*God* LOVETH *the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.*) And on the same ground it is said, in John iii. 16....*God so* LOVED *the world*, &c. because the gift of Christ to die for the world was an infinite expression of divine goodness. And if mankind do generally abuse this goodness, as the Israelites generally did all God's kindnesses to them, yet still the goodness itself is just the same. A dreadful thing, therefore, it is for the non-elect...even as aggravated a piece of wickedness in them as it would be in any body else, to tread under foot the blood of the Son of God, and make light of all the offers of mercy, and neglect so great salvation : And this, above all other things, will be their condemnation in the coming world.... *John* iii. 19. Never are the Jews at all excused, any where in the New Testament, in their slighting the offers of mercy by Christ, on this account, that they were not of the elect : And indeed the offers were sincere, and it was entirely their own fault that they did not accept, and they deserved to be treated accordingly....*Mat.* xxii. 1—7.

OBJ. 7. *But if God so loved the world, the* WHOLE WORLD, *as to give his only begotten Son to die for them, in the sense explained, why does he not go through, and perfect the work, and save the* WHOLE WORLD, *according to that in Rom.* viii. 32 ?.... He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?

ANS. 1. And why did not the *King*, in *Mat.* xxii. who had made *a marriage for his Son*, and sent his servants to say to them that were bidden, *I have prepared my dinner ; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready : come unto the marriage :*—why did not the King, I say, when they refused, *compel them to come in ?* Since he had done so much, why did he not go through, and finish the work ? And this is directly to the point in hand, because this parable is designed to represent that full provision which is made for the salvation of sinners by the death of Christ ; and it proves that the objection has no force in it. But farther—

2. Take your Bible, and read from the 28th verse to the end of that 8th chapter of *Romans*, and you will see what the Apostle's design is, through his whole discourse. "We know," says he, "that all things work together for good to them that "love God....to them who are called according to his purpose. "But how do we know it? Why, because God is fully deter- "mined to bring them to glory at last: For, whom he did fore- "know, he also did predestinate; and whom he did predesti- "nate, them he also called, and them he justified, and them he "glorified. And God was so fully determined to bring them "to glory, and so much engaged in the thing, that he spared "not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; i. e. us, "who love God, and are his elect people:" (For it is of these, and these only, that he here is speaking.) "And since he was "so much engaged as to do this, we may depend upon it that "he will also freely give us all things; i. e. us, who love God, "and are his elect people: So that never any thing shall hin- "der our being finally brought to glory, or separate us from "the love of God—neither tribulation, nor persecution, nor "distress, nor any thing else." So that this is the apostle's argument:—Since God was so much *engaged* to bring them to glory who loved God, and were his elect people, as that he had given his own Son *to die for that end*, they, therefore, might have the strongest assurance that he would do every thing else which would be needful effectually to bring it about.*

But God never *designed* to bring the non-elect to glory, when he gave his Son to die for the world: He designed to declare himself reconcileable to them through Christ....to offer mercy ....to invite them, in common with others, to return....and to assure all that *he that believeth shall be saved*....and to use means

* If we leave God's *design* out of the apostle's argument, I cannot see that his reasoning would be conclusive, any more than a like argument would have been conclusive, if we should suppose Moses to have used it with the Israelites at the side of the *Red Sea*. "Since God has now brought "you all out of Egypt, and thus divided the Red Sea before you, and "drowned your enemies, therefore he will now, without fail, bring you *all* "to the promised land:" Which reasoning would not have been conclusive; for the body of that generation died in the wilderness, and that in a very awful manner, notwithstanding this glorious deliverance.

with them more or less, according to his pleasure ; but finally, they being obstinate, he designed to leave them to themselves, to take their own course, and, in the end, to deal with them according to their deserts....*Mat.* xxiii. 37, 38, and xxii. 1—7: And this being the case, the *objection* from the Apostle's words is evidently groundless.

As to the opinion of the *Arminians*, that God equally designed salvation for all men, purposing to offer salvation to all, and use means with all, and leave all to their own free will, and save those, and those only, who, of their own accord, will become good men ;—as for this opinion, I say, I think they never learnt it from the Bible : but rather, they seem to have been led into it from a notion that mankind are so good-natured that all might, and that at least some actually would, under the enjoyment of the common means of grace, become good men of their own accord, *i. e.* without any such thing as *special grace.* Convince them that this is an error, and they will soon give up their scheme, and acknowledge their need of sovereign grace, and see the reasonableness and truth of the doctrine of election : Or rather, I may say, convince them, first of all, what God is, and what the law is, and what the nature of true religion is, that they may know what conversion means, and what it means to be a good man, and there will be no difficuly then to convince them of the depravity of mankind : for what leads them to think it so easy a thing to become a good man, and that men may be brought to it merely by the force of moral suasion, is, their wrong idea of the nature of true religion. If religion be what they suppose, then, no doubt, any body may easily become good ; for corrupt nature can bear with such a religion : But if religion, or a conformity to God's law, be what I have endeavored to prove it to be in the former discourse, then, no doubt, mankind are naturally diametrically opposite thereto in the temper of their minds—even all mankind, *Arminians* as well as others : and all do, or might know it, if they would seriously and honestly weigh the matter ; for it is plain fact. The *Arminians* are wont mightily to cry up works, and plead for the

moral law, as though they were great friends to it: but if their mistakes about the moral law might once be rectified, and they be brought really and heartily to approve it, *as holy, just, and good*, one principal source of all their errors would be dried up; and particularly their wrong notions about *election* and *universal redemption*.

"But where was there any love," (will the *objector* say) "in "God's giving his Son to die for the non-elect—or sincerity in "his offering them mercy, if he never designed to bring them "to glory, but, from eternity, intended to leave them to perish "in their sins?"

And where was there any love, *I answer*, in God's bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, or sincerity in his offering to bring them to Canaan, if he never designed eventually to bring them there, but, from eternity, intended to leave them to murmur and rebel, and to have their carcases fall in the wilderness?—The solution in both cases is the same, and is plainly this:—as it was the Israelites' own fault that they did not come to Canaan at last, so it is the sinner's own fault that he finally falls short of glory: However, the Israelites were often in a rage, and ready to say, *The Lord hath brought us into the wilderness, to kill us here;* and they murmured against God, and against Moses....for which they were struck dead by hundreds and thousands: and just so sinners do—and the same punishment do they deserve. But had the Israelites felt at heart that it was their own voluntary wickedness which was the *sole cause* of their ruin—and did sinners feel it at heart too, there would be no murmuring in one case or the other; but every mouth would be stopped.—But I have spoken to this before.

To conclude—if this representation of things which I have given be according to truth, hence, then, we may learn these two things, which, indeed, were what I had principally in view in dwelling so long upon this subject, and laboring to answer objections;—I say, we may learn—1. That any poor sinner, all the world over, who hears the gospel and believes it, has sufficient grounds of encouragement, from the freeness of God's

grace, and the sufficiency of Christ, and the universal calls of the gospel, to venture his eternal ALL in this way of salvation, and may safely return to God through Christ, in hopes of acceptance; and that without any particular revelation that *he is elected*, or that *Christ died for him in particular:* "Any may come....the vilest and the worst; and therefore I may come:" and therefore such a particular revelation is perfectly needless: nor could it do any good; for the truth of the gospel may be depended upon—but the truth of such a particular revelation cannot.—2. That any poor, sinful, guilty, broken-hearted backslider, who groans under the burden of sin as the greatest evil, and longs to have the power of sin taken down, and his corruptions slain, and himself thoroughly subdued to God, may look up to the infinite free grace of God through Jesus Christ, and pray, "Lord "take away this heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh: "Turn me, and I shall be turned: Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst "make me clean: O create in me a clean heart, and renew in "me a right spirit, and restore to me the joy of thy salvation! "To thy sovereign grace and self-moving goodness I apply my-"self, through Jesus Christ: God be merciful to me a sinner:" and that whether he knows himself to be a child of God, or no; and so whether he knows that he belongs to the number of the elect, or not: Nor does he need any particular revelation that Christ died for him in particular, or that he is elected, or that he is beloved of God: nor would these things do any good to clear up his warrant to come for mercy; because God may, through Christ, give his holy spirit to any that ask him: All who are athirst are invited to come and take of the waters of life freely: "Any may come; and therefore I may come, al-"though the vilest creature in the world." And I appeal to all the generation of God's children, whether this has not been their way of coming to God through Christ, ever since the day they first came to know the Lord: Sure I am, this is the scripture-way. God has sent out a proclamation through a sinful, guilty world, inviting all to come to him, through Jesus Christ, for all things—and given many encouragements, by represent-

ing how free his grace is....how sufficient Christ is, and how faithful his promises....and that whosoever will, may come, &c. But no where in all the Bible has he revealed it that such and such in particular, by name, among mankind, are elected—and that for these individuals Christ died in particular, by way of encouragement to those particular persons, in order to let them know that *they* might safely trust in Christ, and come to God through him: But then must we be right, when we understand the gospel and believe it, and, upon *the very encouragements which God has given*, are emboldened to return, in hopes of acceptance: and this must be agreeable to God's will; and to this must the influences of the true spirit tend: But to venture to return and look to God for mercy, merely upon any other ground, is anti-scriptural; and whatsoever spirit influences thereunto cannot, therefore, be from God.

And thus we see how the door of life is opened by Christ, our great Mediator and high-priest: And hence, Christ calls himself *the door:* John x. 9....*I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved:* And hence, also, he calls himself *the way to the Father:* John xiv. 6....*I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man cometh to the Father but by me; for through him*, (saith the Apostle....Eph. ii. 18), *we both have an access, by one spirit, unto the Father:* and also, *through him, God is reconciling the world to himself*, sending *ambassadors*, and *beseeching them to be reconciled*....II. Cor. v. 19, 20.—Which leads me to the next thing proposed.

SECTION VI.

A VIEW OF THE METHODS OF DIVINE GRACE WITH MANKIND, FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD.

4. I am to show *what methods the great Governor of the world has entered upon, in order to put in execution those designs of mercy which he had in view when he contrived to open this* DOOR, *in such a wonderful and glorious manner, by the interposition of his own dear Son.*

The most high God is conscious of his own infinite excellence....his right to, and authority over the children of men:

He sees mankind as being under infinite obligations to love and obey him, and that the least defect is an infinite evil: He judges the law to be holy, just, and good....and mankind wholly to blame for their non-conformity thereto, and worthy to be dealt with according to it: He knows their contrariety to him, to his law, and to his gospel: He sees all these things as they really are: His infinite wisdom sees how it is fit for such an one as he is, now, through a mediator, to conduct towards such a world as this is: He sees what conduct is most becoming, and, all things considered, most meet and suitable: and to this conduct the perfect rectitude of his nature prompts and inclines him. Upon the whole, he necessarily and freely determines to act like himself; i. e. like an absolute Sovereign, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. This was his determination from eternity—this is his determination in time—and according to this rule he actually proceeds, in all his methods with a sinful, guilty, obstinate world—*Working all things according to the counsel of his own will*....Eph. i. 11—sovereignly, and yet wisely....holily and justly, and yet as *the Lord God gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness and truth.* As is his nature, such is his conduct; and hence his conduct exhibits to us the very image of his heart. Thus it is in the *impetration*, and thus it is in the *application* of our redemption, and in all the methods he takes with a guilty world in general: And hence, all his ways are calculated to exalt God, and humble the sinner—to honor the law, and discountenance sin—to exclude boasting, and to glorify grace;—as we shall more fully see in what follows:

(1.) As being the supreme Lord and sovereign Ruler of the whole world, he does, through Jesus Christ, the great Mediator, *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, by whom his honor has been secured—he does, I say, through him, *grant, and, by an act of grace, confirm to the world of mankind, a general reprieve from that utter ruin which was threatened by the law, and to which an apostate world were exposed.* Total destruction was threatened in case of disobedience: Gen. ii. 17

....*In dying thou shalt die;* i. e. thou shalt die with a witness.... thy ruin shall be complete. And now nothing could be expected but a dreadful doom, and to be sealed down under everlasting despair: But, instead of this, the great God dooms the *tempter*, and threatens utter ruin to his new-erected kingdom: Gen. iii. 14, 15....*Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed—and thy head shall be bruised.* But guilty man is reprieved from a total ruin, and allowed a space for repentance: And the world has now stood almost six thousand years, reprieved by the tender mercy of God, through Jesus Christ.

Indeed, certain evils were denounced by the Majesty of heaven, as standing monuments of his displeasure, always to attend a guilty race while in this world. Peculiar sorrows were appointed to women, and hard labor and toil to men, and sickness and pain to both, till *death* should put an end to their reprieve and to their space for repentance...(ver. 16—19):—And when our day to die shall come, we are not to know: we lie at mercy, and God acts sovereignly: so long as he pleases, so long shall we be reprieved, and no longer: And thus, while tender mercy appears in the general reprieve, the holiness, and justice, and sovereignty of God appear in the manner of it. God is exalted—a guilty world lies at his mercy—they are, in a sense, continually under his rod, and every moment liable to drop into an eternal hell: They are held up in his hand....hell gapes to receive them, and now he lets one fall, and then another....now this, and then that, just as it seems good in his sight. Surely, this is awful! Surely, mankind are in very humbling circumstances, and in circumstanses wonderfully calculated to awaken them *to repent, and pray to God, if peradventure their wickedness may be forgiven.*

When the general reprieve, granted to this lower world, shall come to a period, then will the great Judge of the world proceed, with all who shall be found impenitent, *according to law*, without any mixture of mercy. The present reprieve, granted as a space for repentance, is not *of the law*, but *of mere grace through Jesus Christ.* Now *grace* takes place, and patience,

forbearance, and long-suffering, sit on the throne: but then *law* shall take place, and strict justice reign. The mediation of Christ, at present, secures the honor of law and justice, and opens the door for grace; but then the day of grace will be at an end: A guilty world shall no longer be treated in a way of mercy, and favored on Christ's account; but be proceeded against in flaming fire and terrible vengeance, and every one be punished according to his deserts. How long the day of God's patience with a guilty world is to last, we know not. A guilty world lies at his mercy, and may be all summoned to the bar when he pleases. Surely this is awful and awakening! but this is the state in which God means to show all long-suffering, and to exercise and display the infinite patience of his nature: and surely this should *lead us to* repentance! Thus, this is one step in a way of mercy, which God, in his infinite grace through Jesus Christ, has taken with a guilty world. And what is the improvement which mankind are disposed to make of it? Why, *because sentence against their evil works is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the Sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*....Eccle. viii. 11.

(2.) Another favor granted to mankind in general by the great Governor of the world, through Jesus Christ, is, *a competency of the good things of this life for their comfortable support, while under this reprieve, and in this new state of probation.* By law, mankind, for their apostacy, stood disinherited of every good thing, doomed to a complete destruction....*Gen.* ii. 17; but now, through a Mediator, they are dealt with in a way of mercy. It is true, in token of the divine displeasure, God turned man out of paradise, and cursed the ground, and subjected man to hard labor, (*Gen.* iii.) but then, at the same time, for Christ's sake, a general grant of many good things is made to a guilty world: They are allowed to live on God's earth.... breathe in his air...see by the light of his sun...to eat of the herb of the field, and to eat bread in the sweat of their face....to clothe themselves with the skins of slain beasts....*Gen.* iii. They are allowed summer and winter....seed-time and harvest; and the

beasts of the field are given to them....*Gen.* viii. 22, and ix. 1, 2, 3 : Yea, it has been God's way abundantly to do good to a guilty world....*to send rain, and grant fruitful seasons, and fill the hearts of men with food and gladness*....Acts xiv. 17 : So that, considering we are an apostate, guilty world, we may well say, with the Psalmist, *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord*....Psalm xxxiii. 5 ; and this, notwithstanding all the calamities which over-spread the whole earth : for we are now to attribute every thing in our circumstances, whereby we are better of it than the damned in hell are, to the mere mercy and goodness of God, through Jesus Christ : Thus God reprieves a guilty world, and grants them food and raiment, to the intent that they may have a space for repentance. Surely now it is vile, infinitely vile, *to despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering*, and not to take it in and understand it, *that the goodness of God should lead us to repentance :* And it is great madness, *after our hard and impenitent hearts to go on in our rebellion, and treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God*.... Rom. ii. 4, 5 : And yet this is the general temper, and common way of the world.

(3.) Another common favor granted to mankind, upon Christ's account, is, *a general resurrection from the dead*, (I. Cor. xv. 21,) to the intent that all who believe, repent, and return to God through Jesus Christ, may be completely happy in soul and body forever. It is certain the law threatened death, but made no provision for a resurrection : and if the law had been executed, and no mediator provided, we have no reason to think there ever would have been any resurrection : And I cannot see why a general resurrection may not be considered under the notion of a mercy in itself, notwithstanding many, by their final impenitence, lay a foundation for their being raised up to everlasting shame and confusion. I am ready to think that to be raised from the dead must surely be of the nature of a *mercy*, and so be the effect of Christ's merits ; but the particular manner in which the wicked shall be raised, may never-

theless be considered as a *punishment*, and so be the effect of their sin and final impenitence. Christ's merit lays the foundation for a general resurrection; and all who believe and repent shall be raised up to glory and complete blessedness; and all who die in their sins shall be raised up to shame and complete misery.

(4.) There are also divers other things granted to mankind in general, which seem pretty evidently to be of the nature of mercies, and so to be owing to the interposition and merits of our glorious Mediator, Christ Jesus, the only Mediator between God and a sinful, guilty world—to whose merits and mediation, every thing which mankind enjoy, which is of the nature of a mercy, is to be attributed;—divers things, I say, whereby much is done towards putting such an apostate race of beings into a capacity of comfortably living together in this world, while they are in their new state of probation;—divers things in our temper, which seem originally to take their rise very much from that temperament of body and animal constitution which God, our Former, gives us;—there is a *natural good humor*, *a natural compassion*, *a natural modesty*, and *natural affections*: These things, in a greater or less degree, we find to be natural to men, and to have a very great influence to keep under and restrain their corruptions, and to incline and prompt to many actions materially good, and greatly for the comfort of human society and benefit of mankind in general: These things do evidently keep mankind from abundance of wickedness, which otherwise they would commit;—they have a heart for a thousand abominations, but these things restrain them: and these things do evidently put mankind on to a thousand actions materially good, which otherwise they would never do: they have a heart bad enough to neglect them, but these things excite them to do them. Were it not for these and other restraints, I see not why mankind should not be as bad in this world, as they will be in the next. Wicked men have no wickedness infused into them at death; and therefore they have no other nature, no other principle of sin in their hearts,

after they are dead, than they had before: but, as soon as they are dead, they are evidently no doubt as universally contrary to God and all that is good, as the devils themselves. As soon as ever those things which now restrain them are all removed, their true temper appears without any disguise. It is no doubt, therefore, a great mercy for mankind to be thus restrained. They enjoy more comfort....they commit less sin.... they merit less punishment....they are under better advantages to live together, to enjoy the means of grace and attend to the offers of mercy by Jesus Christ, *who is the Savior of all men, but especially of them that believe*...I. Tim. iv. 10.

Thus the great God, instead of executing the sentence of the law in all its severity upon a guilty world, does, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, grant to mankind in general these common favors :—They are reprieved from a total ruin—have a comfortable maintenance in this world allowed them—a general resurrection is decreed—several natural endowments are granted, to restrain from bad actions, and to prompt to actions materially good : And hereby the Governor of the world has laid the foundation, and prepared the way to go on to use the methods he designed, more immediately tending to reclaim and recover a sinful, guilty world to himself ; for now mankind are put into a sort of capacity of being treated with in such a way.

These things ought deeply to affect mankind. We lie under many calamities, and yet enjoy many mercies in this our natural state of guilt and condemnation ; all which ought to be improved to awaken, convince, and humble us, and lead us to repent, and cry to God for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace, and predispose us cordially to receive and embrace that revelation, which God has made in his word, of our ruin, and the way of our recovery.

But, through the great blindness and corruption of mankind, these things have had a very contrary effect. Mankind, finding themselves thus reprieved, and thus kindly treated by God, have many of them hereby been led to think they are in pretty

good standing....not *by nature children of wrath*, and under *condemnation*. The devil told Eve they *should not surely die*; so, many are now ready to think that the old law, which threatened the least sin with death, is repealed; and that we are now born into the world free from any guilt: And mankind, finding themselves endowed with *natural modesty*, *good-humor*, *compassion*, &c. are ready to dream that they are born into the world without any sinful corruption of nature, but rather as holy as Adam in innocence; and hence are very insensible of any need of such a Redeemer and Sanctifier as are provided: And so they are predisposed to dislike that revelation which God has made in his word concerning our ruin and the way of our recovery: And hence mankind are strongly bent to misunderstand, and misinterpret, and disbelieve the law and the gospel. And besides, by this goodness and forbearance of God, men are emboldened in sin, as if it were not a very great evil, nor God very much set against it. They begin to think God is all made up of mercy, and that they are in no great danger: And so, *after their hard and impenitent hearts, they go on to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* Thus God and his goodness are abused by this vile, wicked race of apostate, rebellious creatures: And, indeed, all this is no more than was expected: great reason, therefore, was there for him so effectually to secure his own honor, and the honor of his holy law, by the interposition of his own dear Son as Mediator. And now, let mankind be ever so bad, he can go on with his methods of mercy, to accomplish all his designs of grace; and all consistently with the honor of his holiness and justice, law and government, and sacred authority.

(5.) Mankind being naturally very insensible of their sinful, guilty, ruined state—and totally ignorant of, and unable to find out, any way of obtaining the divine favor, and wholly averse, in the temper of their hearts, to a genuine return to God; therefore God, of his infinite grace through Jesus Christ, has, in various ways, and divers manners, according to the good pleasure

of his will, by immediate revelation from heaven, set before mankind their ruin, and the way of their recovery....offered many arguments, motives, and encouragements, to persuade them to return, and denounced terrible threatenings to deter them from going on in their rebellion, and directed them, in the use of certain means of grace, to seek for the inward influences of the holy spirit, to awaken and convince, to humble and convert, and effectually recover them to God, through the great Mediator.

(6.) And, because the Most High sees that, through the very bad temper of mankind, this external revelation, although most excellently adapted thereto, yet, if left to themselves, would finally prove altogether ineffectual to recover any of mankind; yea, so very far from it, that mankind would not so much as rightly understand or believe it, or seriously take matters into consideration, but would misunderstand and pervert it, and finally universally disbelieve and renounce and forget it, and not suffer it to have any room in the world: therefore he has, from the beginning of the world, and does still, and will to the end of the world, by the inward influences of his spirit, and by the outward dispensations of his providence, carry on, according to his sovereign pleasure, the work of his grace....accomplish his eternal purposes of mercy....recover sinners to himself...maintain true religion in the world....preserve his church...gather in all the elect...display all his g'orious perfections in his dealings with mankind, and get to himself a great name in the end; exhibiting in his whole conduct, from first to last, the most lively image of himself.

In these two last particulars we have a general account of those methods which God does take with a sinful, guilty race, more immediately tending to their recovery, which we may see exemplified in his dealings with mankind, from the beginning.

1. In the earliest ages of the world, *immediately after the fall*, he began to enter upon these methods of grace: he taught our first parents their ruin, and the way of their recovery by the

promised *seed;* and instituted sacrifices to typify the great atonement, which should afterwards be made for the sins of the world....*Gen.* iii: And what he taught our first parents, they taught their children: and hence *Cain* and *Abel*, and after-generations, learnt to worship God by sacrifice....*Gen.* iv. 3—8. Now *Adam* lived until *Methuselah* was two hundred and forty-six years old, and *Methuselah* lived until *Shem* was an hundred years old, and *Shem* lived until the time of *Abraham* and *Isaac*—yea, till *Isaac* was fifty years old; so that the news of *Adam*'s fall...of the ruin of mankind, and of salvation by the *seed of the woman*, might easily have been handed down by tradition from one to another, and all mankind might have been fully acquainted with these things: And besides these external teachings and means of grace, God granted the inward influences of his spirit, whereby some were effectually recovered to God, of whom were *Abel*, *Enoch*, and *Noah*, who were also signalized by divine Providence....*Gen.* iv. 4. and v. 22. and vi. 9. compared with *Heb.* xi. 4—7.

But while God thus early began to use methods for the recovery of a sinful, guilty world to himself, they began early to show their aversion to God, and unwillingness to return. *Cain* seems, by the sacrifice which he offered, quite insensible that he was a fallen creature, and that he needed an atonement for sin. He brought only of the fruit of the ground for a thank-offering, (like the *Pharisee* in Luke xviii. whose prayer consisted only in thanksgiving, without any faith or repentance) but brought none of the flock for a sin-offering, (*Gen.* iv.) although *without shedding of blood there could be no remission*....Heb. ix. 22. He was a formal, impenitent hypocrite, nor would God accept him; but *Abel* found favor in the sight of the Lord by faith....*Heb.* xi. 4: And therefore *Cain* was angry at God, and enraged at his brother, and murdered him, and cast off all religion, and gave himself up to serve his lusts: yea, he forsook the visible church of God, and departed, and went into the land of *Nod*. And thus he, and, afterwards, his posterity after him, join to renounce true religion, and openly distinguish

themselves from God's visible people on earth....*Gen.* iv. 16. And it seems good to the supreme Governor of the world even to let them all take their way, and act their own nature.

For a while true religion was maintained in the family of *Seth*....Gen. iv. 26: and to put honor upon the practice thereof, *Enoch* was translated to heaven....*Gen.* v. 24: But yet, in process of time, they degenerated and became so much like the rest of the world—like the posterity of *Cain*, that they were disposed to relish their company, and marry their daughters.... *Gen.* vi. 2. And then presently the contagion spread—*The wickedness of mankind* in general *was great upon the earth*, (ver. 5.)—*All flesh corrupted their ways, and the earth was filled with violence*, (ver. 11, 12.) And now the great Governor of the world raises up *Noah*, and makes him a *preacher of righteousness;* and *Noah* preaches, and God waits an hundred and twenty years; but mankind will not be reformed, and therefore God gives over that generation, and drowns the world by an universal deluge. *First*, Mankind break through all the restraints lying upon them....discover the very temper of their hearts....publicly show their aversion to God, their disregard of his grace, their utter unwillingness to return, and their perverse propensity to go on in their rebellion. *Secondly*, God, through the Mediator, uses means to reclaim them, and shows all long-suffering, and so tries them. *Thirdly*, They, remaining obstinate...trampling under foot his authority, and despising his goodness, he, at last, in a most public manner, executes righteous vengeance upon them. He displays his infinite goodness and patience in waiting so long, and using so many means for their recovery: he displays his sovereignty in waiting but just so long, and in taking but just so much pains with them: he displays his holiness, justice, and truth, in bringing that destruction upon them at the very time before threatened: and, in the whole, he displays his infinite wisdom—his whole conduct being excellently well calculated to make all succeeding generations *know that he is the* LORD, and suited to maintain the honor of his holiness, justice, goodness, and truth...of his

law and government, and sacred authority: And thus we see what methods God took with the old world, together with the result of all. And now,

2. We come to take a brief view of his ways with mankind *since the flood*, and of their carriage towards him. There is no doubt but that Noah had received by tradition and well understood the fall of Adam...the ruin of mankind...the way of recovery by *the seed of the woman*...the institution, end, and design of sacrifices: And there is no doubt but that he faithfully instructed his children, in what he himself knew; and they might have taught their children, and they the generation following, and so all the world might have known the way of salvation through a mediator: And it is certain that this would have been the case, had mankind been in a disposition sufficiently to have prized the knowledge of these things: But *when they knew God*, by parental instruction, *they did not glorify him as God; neither were they thankful* for these advantages which infinite goodness had granted them, (Rom. i. 21.) *but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened:* And they soon lost the knowledge of true religion, and fell off to idolatry, and *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things*, (ver. 23.) *For they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, (ver. 28.) And when mankind, presently after the flood, did thus publicly discover the temper of their hearts, by renouncing the true God and true religion, and falling away to idolatry and superstition, and all manner of wickedness;—I say, when mankind, notwithstanding the late awful warning they had had by the universal deluge, did thus quickly show themselves so entirely disposed to their sinful and rebellious courses—*For this cause God gave them up*, (ver. 24, 26, 28.)—even suffered them to take their own way, and run their own ruin. The whole earth might all have been God's people, and his visible family, but they would not: they might all have retained the knowledge of the true God and of the way to life, but they

did not like to, and God was not obliged to make them, and therefore he even let them take their own course; and yet took care, in after ages, not to leave himself without witness, but, by many wonderful works, to let all the nations of the earth *know that he was the* LORD: And if any would repent and return, he made provision for their reception as proselytes into the Jewish church: And doubtless here and there one, from age to age, by the inward influences of his blessed spirit, were brought so to do; and *the rest were blinded*, as is said in a parallel case...Rom. xi. 7.

And now the knowledge of the true God, and of true religion, must presently have been lost from off the face of the whole earth, and never have been recovered, and *satan* had the most full possession of the whole world to the latest posterity, had not free and sovereign grace interposed in a most wonderful manner, in this dark and awful juncture: But, in this very season, God was pleased, of his own mere goodness and sovereign pleasure, still through the appointed mediator, by the gracious influences of his spirit, and by immediate revelations, and by the special dispensations of his providence, to preserve to himself a seed to serve him. He called Abram alone, as it were, from the rest of the world, and blessed him; he made further revelations to him touching the *promised seed*, and entered into a covenant to be his God, and the God of his children after him: And now, a new world of wonders begins to open to our view, in the divine dispensations towards Abram and his seed... *Gen.* xii, &c.

Note—While God was doing these things with Abraham, the rest of the world grew wicked apace; and therefore God thought fit to give a specimen of the temper of his heart, and let the nations *know that he was the* LORD, *by raining fire and brimstone out of heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah*, who were remarkably wicked; and, at the same time, delivering *righteous Lot*, (Gen. x.)—A dispensation so remarkable, and never the like before heard of, that no doubt it flew like lightning all the world over, and spread terror and surprize through the guilty

nations: Howsoever, *for all this, they turned not to the Lord.* —Well, Abraham is circumcised, with all his household, and true religion is taught and maintained in his family, and Isaac his son, and Eleazer his servant, seem to have been savingly wrought upon by divine grace: And God blesses Abraham, and he becomes very great; and God protects him wherever he goes, to the honor of his great name, in the midst of an idolatrous world. Nevertheless, the world, instead of growing wiser and better by all this, which doubtless was heard of and much wondered at among the nations, they grew worse and worse—yea, wickedness appears openly in Abraham's family itself. Ishmael discovers a bad spirit; he mocks at Isaac....Gen. xxi. 9: *And he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit*...Gal. iv. 29: So that he was, in a sort, excommunicated and cast out of God's visible family; and it is not long before true religion is a thing unknown among his numerous posterity: And they who were of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, were now numbered with the heathen. Thus, after this sort, it fared with Cain, the first persecutor—and thus it fares with Ishmael, for the warning of all godless and carnal professors: And yet, from age to age, this same temper has appeared, and yet still does appear, although, perhaps, this sin, from the beginning of the world to this day, has never yet gone unpunished.

Now, it was said, *In* Isaac *shall thy seed be called:* And with him God renewed the covenant, and to him the promises were repeated, and God blessed him, and he became very great; and he also was under a special divine protection—Yet there was a *profane Esau* in his family, who made so light of the spiritual blessings of Abraham, as, for a mere trifle, to sell his *birth-right:* And he afterwards became a persecutor of his brother Jacob, and his posterity soon lost the knowledge of the true God and of the true religion, and degenerated into a state of *heathenism.*

Nor can it be attributed to any thing but the free and sovereign grace of God, that Jacob and his seed did not do so too.

But so it was; for so it seemed good in the eyes of him, who has *mercy on whom he will have mercy*, and whose *purpose, according to election, always stands independent of works*... Rom. ix. 11: I say, so it was, through the power of him *who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will*, that when all the other nations of the earth were suffered to renounce the true God and the true religion, that *in Jacob God was known, and his name was great in Israel.*—Never was there a nation which discovered a stronger propensity to idolatry, and all manner of wickedness, than they: And notwithstanding all the mighty restraints, by God laid upon them, they were almost perpetually breaking through all, and rushing on like the horse into the battle. Neither warnings, nor threatenings, nor the authority of God, nor the tears of their prophets, nor the most terrible judgments, were ever able effectually to restrain that people and turn them to God: And had not God always, by his special grace, kept a *remnant* for himself, they would have been like *Sodom*, and like to *Gomorrah*...*Isai.* i. 2—9—*Rom.* xi. 2—7.

Now the divine perfections were most illustriously displayed, in the divine conduct towards this people, from age to age; and that not only before their faces, but also in the eyes of all the nations round about them. Marvellous things were wrought in Egypt, and wonders at the Red Sea, and forty years in the wilderness, which no doubt did ring through the world, and were enough to have made all the earth *know that he was the* LORD, and, but for their perverse stubbornness, to have brought them all to worship him, and him only—But all this was so far from reclaiming the heathen nations, that it hardly tamed the Israelites themselves. They rebelled at Tiberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-Hattaavah, and were perpetually *provoking the Lord to wrath*...Deut. ix. *When he slew them, then they sought him; and returned and enquired early after God. Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues: For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant*...Psal. lxxviii.

34—37: And many a time were they within a hair's breadth of destruction, and would surely have been utterly destroyed, but that *he wrought for his great name's sake*...Exod. xxxii. —Num. xiv.—Ezek. xx.

So again, in the days of Joshua, he divided Jordan, *and drove out the heathen before them, and gave them their land in possession, and made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents: Yet they afterwards tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies, but turned back and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images*....Psalm lxxviii. 54—58—Judg. ii. 6—20. And now, for the space of many years, God, by raising up *judges*, and by sending *prophets*, and executing judgments, did labor to reform them; but all in vain: for *they quickly turned aside, like a deceitful bow:* However, in the mean while, the goodness and patience of God on the one hand, and his holiness and justice on the other, were illustriously displayed by his wonderful works in the midst of the earth, to be sounded out among all nations, that all the earth might *know that he was the* LORD.

In the days of David and Solomon, God *wrought for his great name's sake,* and exalted his people, and made Israel honorable in the sight of all nations; yet were they not sincere in his sight: and when outward restraints were afterwards taken off, they soon discovered the hidden temper of their hearts—that they did not care for God or his worship, but liked *Dan* and *Bethel* as well as the temple of Jerusalem: Thus did the ten tribes; nor was their treacherous sister, Judah, more sincere. When a good king reigned, they would pretend to be good; and when a bad king reigned, they stood ready for idols: And now God sent judgment upon them time after time, and sent all his servants, the prophets, saying, *O do not this abominable thing which my soul hateth:* but they would not hearken. *The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place: but they mocked the messengers*

of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of God arose against his people, till there was no remedy: Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, and gave them all into his hand....II. Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16, 17.

However, God was tenderly touched at the public reproach and dishonor to which his great name was exposed, in the eyes of insulting nations all around, who *clapped their hands, and stamped with their feet, and rejoiced with all their heart*, for what was done to the people called by his name—glorying that their GOD was no better than the *dumb idols* which they served.—Wherefore God raised up the prophet Ezekiel, who clears up God's conduct towards his people, in chapters 16th and 18th, and on—and dooms the neighboring nations in the name of God, declaring what judgment should come upon them from the hand of God for their insults, whereby they should be made to *know that he was the* LORD....as in the 25th to chapter 31. And now, also, Daniel and his companions were by God raised up, that by them his name might become great in the eyes of all nations: And for them he works such deliverances as to constrain the haughty monarchs of the earth to issue out their decrees through all the world, that none should *speak any thing amiss* against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, upon pain of being *cut in pieces*, and their *houses made a dung-hill*—and that, in all their dominions, men should *fear and tremble* before the God of Daniel, (*Dan.* iii. 29, and vi. 26.) Surely the infinite wisdom of God appears most wonderfully, in all the astonishing methods which he has taken to make himself known, and to keep up the honor of his great name among such a wicked, God-hating race of beings!

And now, all this while, there was nothing but the infinite goodness, and free and sovereign grace of God, together with his covenant faithfulness, to move him not to cast off and utterly reject his people, and let them be scattered among the heathen, and their name perish from off the earth. It was for *his great name's sake* that he wrought salvation for them from

time to time....*Ezek.* xx. When there was no motive in them, but every thing to the contrary—then, for his own sake, he undertook *to write his law in their hearts, and put it in their inward parts....to be their God, and make them his people, and to remember their iniquities no more against them, and to bring them back to their own land, and plant them, and build them up*....Ezek. xxxvi. 16—34.

And however, by the Babylonish captivity, the Jewish people were pretty thoroughly cured of their idolatrous disposition, yet, after their return, and after the godly men of that generation were dead, they soon began to show that they were as averse to God, and the life of religion, as ever: And yet, all these things notwithstanding, God is determined to make one trial more. He had sent one servant after another, and they had been beaten, and stoned, and put to shame, and sent away empty: Now, therefore, he sends his *only Son*, to see if they will hear him: and behold they say, *Come, let us kill him*....Mat. xxi. 33—39. Wherefore, at last, God determines to cast off that nation, (ver. 41,) and to go and try the heathen, whom, for a long time, he had suffered to take their own ways.

And now, to his apostles Christ gives commission, to *go into all the earth, and preach the gospel to every creature; and he that believeth*, says he, *shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned:* And they run, and preach, and cry, *Repent, and turn from your dumb idols, to serve the living God.* And had not they been stopped, they would soon have carried the news all round the world: But Jews and Gentiles combine together, and earth and hell are in arms to defeat the design; nevertheless, *as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed:* And God carried on his work through a sea of blood, and in about three hundred years conquered the Roman empire.

No sooner is this done, but the *mystery of iniquity* begins to work, and *the man of sin* to be revealed. The devil and his servants turn their coat, and, under the cloak of religion and good order, establish the kingdom of satan in a new form: for it is the nature of mankind to hate true religion. And now Anti-

christ reigns, and *scatters the holy people, and wears out the saints of the most high, for a time, and times, and half a time.* In the mean while, *the woman flies into the wilderness, the witnesses prophecy in sackcloth*, until, at last, *the witnesses* themselves *are slain*: And now religion is driven even just out of the world, and there had been no hope, but that *God awoke as one out of sleep, like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.* And behold *the spirit of life from God enters into the two witnesses,* that is, Luther and Calvin, and others their contemporaries; *and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them:* And God put them out of their enemies reach: *And there was a great earthquake, and a tenth part of the city fell*...Rev. ix: And a glorious day began to dawn.

But now, it is not long before many turn heretics and enthusiasts, and the world rises in arms, and, by fire and sword, endeavors to demolish the redeemer's kingdom. However, God wrought for his great name's sake, and has ever since been working, and will go on conquering and to conquer, until all the nations of the earth are brought into subjection to his son.

Thus we have taken a brief view of the methods which God has taken to recover a sinful, guilty world, to himself: The *external means* we have chiefly dwelt upon;—upon the *internal*, something farther shall be added presently: but let us first make a few *remarks*.

Rem. 1. Had not mankind been wholly to blame, they might *all* of them, from the beginning, have enjoyed the benefit of divine *revelation*—Nothing secluded them therefrom, but their own bad temper and bad conduct: And had not mankind been wholly to blame, they might all of them have enjoyed the gospel, and had it preached all over the world to this day —Nothing has hindered it but their own perverse obstinacy... their hating the light, and hating the truth. Strange it is, therefore, that some men of learning should be so full of char-

rity for the heathen, who thus hate God, despise Christ, and reject the gospel.*

Rem. 2. Mankind have manifested the highest degree of *aversion* to God and true religion from the *beginning* of the world, and that almost in all possible ways. Hundreds, and thousands, and millions, have they in their rage put to death, and that in the most cruel and barbarous manner—Strange it is, therefore, that so many matters of fact have not, to this day, convinced mankind that they are truly enemies to God—Strange that they can have the face to make the old pretence, and say, *If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets....* Mat. xxiii. 30—when all the time, from age to age, they have been acting over the old scene.

Rem. 3. It has been owing wholly and entirely to the free grace and almighty power of God, that the *church* has been *preserved*, and true religion not driven quite out of the world: It is one of the greatest miracles that ever was wrought.

Rem. 4. God has always acted *sovereignly* in choosing what family, nation, or nations, he would preserve true religion among; *all* being by nature equally averse to God, and equally unworthy: and has always acted *justly* in giving over other families and nations for their sin and apostacy.

Rem. 5. The whole *scheme* of the divine conduct has been most *excellently calculated* to display all the divine perfections to the best advantage; and it does exhibit to us the very image of his heart in strong and lively colors. But to proceed,

* But perhaps some will be ready to say, that *there may be many honest persons among the* heathen, *who never heard of the gospel, and never rejected it, who may stand fair for heaven.*

Ans. There is a number of such honest sort of persons among Christians, but their natural enmity to God and Christ and gospel-grace is found to be as great as others; and sometimes *publicans* and *harlots* enter into heaven before them—Surely none of them more honest than the *young man* in the gospel, nor ever arrived to greater attainments; and therefore all of them might do as he did, if under the same circumstances. That natural kind of honesty, many times, is an occasion of men's being hardened against Christianity; for they are very ready to say, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men*...like him in *Luke* xviii. Doubtless these *honest heathen* would do as their fathers did, had they the opportunity: So the *honest Jews* did....See *Mat.* xxiii. 28—33.

Although the external means of grace, and remarkable dispensations of Providence, perhaps may, in a measure, sometimes restrain mankind, and bring them to a feigned submission to God and his laws; yet, such is their rooted enmity and entire aversion to God and true religion, that not one will hereby be brought to repent and sincerely turn to God....Psal. lxxviii. 34—37. and lxxxi. 8—12....Isai. v. 1—7. Nothing short of those inward influences of the spirit, which are almighty and all-conquering, will effectually attain the end.... Mat. xi. 20—27....Eph. i. 19: And therefore, besides the *external means of grace*, God has, as it were, taken a world of pains with one and another of mankind *by the inward influences of his* SPIRIT. The external means, indeed, which have been used, are more open to observation; and so also is that external opposition which mankind have made: but the same ends which God has been pursuing by the external means, viz. to convince mankind of their sinful, guilty, ruined state, and bring them to return to God through a mediator—the same has he been pursuing, by the inward influences of his spirit;—and the same opposition which has openly appeared against the means of grace, has also secretly wrought mightily in the hearts of men against the inward influences of the spirit. Mankind are as much inclined to resist the spirit, as they are the *word* of God, and that for the same reason and from the same temper; because both aim at the same thing—a thing most contrary to their corruptions.

Perhaps there are *some* whom God never vouchsafes at all to strive with by his spirit; and these are ready to think there is no such thing. *Others* are a little awakened, and, from self-love, the fears of hell, and the hopes of heaven, they reform their lives a little, and set about some external duties, and so think to make amends for their past sins, and recommend themselves to the divine favor; but are as great enemies as ever to the power of religion: and here God leaves them to perish. *Others* are carried farther, and become more strict and painful, but still from the same principles: and there they are left to

perish. Not one takes one step in earnest, unless he is driven to it; nor goes one step farther than he is driven: and therefore God leaves one here, and another there, as seems good in his sight. They do not *like to retain God in their knowledge*, and therefore he *gives them over to a reprobate mind*, as those spoken of in Rom. i. 28. *Some*, indeed, are carried very far by the common influences of the holy spirit; *they are enlightened, ...they taste of the heavenly gift, and of the powers of the world to come, and are made partakers of the holy ghost*; and yet, after all, *fall away* and perish....Heb. vi. They have a great sense of their sinful, guilty, undone state....of the wrath of God, and dreadfulness of damnation, and are mightily brought down; and then have a great sense of the mercy of God, the dying love of Christ, and the glory of heaven: and they think they are converted, and they are ravished with the thought. However, in the end, all is turned to feed their pride and their presumption, and to harden and embolden them in sin—They are not so much afraid of sin now, because they are confident they shall never go to hell: And many times this sort of people, through the great swelling of spiritual pride, and the immediate influences of Satan, come to have strange experiences....turn to be strange creatures....broach strange errors, and seem to be nearly forsaken by God, reason, and conscience: and yet, (yea, and by the same means) get to be the *holiest* creatures in the world, by their own account. But while the sinners, with whom the holy spirit strives, do many of them turn out after this sort, some in one way and some in another, there are *others* with whom God makes thorough work; that is, makes them thoroughly understand and feel their sinful, guilty, helpless, undone state, and see into and believe the gospel way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, and return home to God in that way: And now they *are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*....I. Pet. i. 5. And here God has *mercy on whom he will have mercy*—and even so it has been as to the external means of grace from the beginning of the world. With *some*, God has taken more

pains and longer; and with *others*, less pains and shorter: but when all the rest of the world degenerated to *heathenism*, God took effectual methods with the Israelites to keep them from doing so too: And thus, in a resembling manner, he does with all the spiritual seed of Abraham—with his elect: whereby, in spite of all opposition, they are brought to glory at last: they are fed with *manna* every day; the *pillar of cloud* by day, and *of fire* by night, is their continual guide; and *the rock which follows them is Christ;* i. e. they are fed and are guided...they live and are refreshed, and are helped to hold on their way, by continual influences from on high, by constant communications of divine grace: And so *the path of the just is like the shining light, which shines more and more to the perfect day.*

Remarks. Never is any poor sinner under the light of the gospel passed by, without being awakened by the Holy Spirit; but God sees he is deaf to the voice of his word, and hates to be awakened, and loves to go on secure. Never is any awakened sinner forsaken by the spirit of God, and left to take his own way, and run his own ruin, but that first he resisted and grieved the Holy Spirit, and stifled conviction, and rent away, as it were, out of God's hands: And never is a poor sinner savingly brought home to God and trained up for heaven, but that, from first to last, it was absolutely and entirely owing to the infinite goodness, free grace, and almighty power of God: And, indeed, thus will it appear at the great day of judgment, that all who perish are wholly to blame, and all that are saved will have none to glory in but the Lord. But I have elsewhere so much insisted upon the nature of the influences of the Holy Spirit, that I must not here enlarge.

Thus the way to life is opened by Christ Jesus, and all are invited to return and be saved: And thus we see the methods which God takes for the recovery of a sinful, guilty world—And from all that has been said we may draw these *inferences:*

1. It is undoubtedly the duty of poor sinners to be *deeply affected* with all these wonderful methods of divine grace, and to *strive and labor with the greatest painfulness and diligence*

to fall in with the design of the gospel....to be sensible of their sinful, guilty, undone state, and to look to the free grace of God, through Jesus Christ, for relief, and to repent and return to God through him: Luke xiii. 24...*Strive to enter in at the srait gate.* Some are of the opinion, that because the very best that sinners can do, while enemies to God in their hearts, is, as to the *manner* of it, sinful and odious in the eyes of the divine holiness, that therefore their best way is to do nothing, but to sit still and wait for the spirit; but nothing is more contrary to scripture or reason: The scripture says, *Strive to enter:* And reason teaches, that when the God of Heaven, the great Governor of the world, is thus coming out after guilty rebels in a way of mercy, it becomes them to be deeply affected thereat, and to exert all their rational powers in opposition to their sloth and corruptions...laboring to lie open to the means of conviction...avoiding every thing that tends to promote security, and to render ineffectual the methods of divine grace, and practising every thing that tends to their farther awakening. And O, let this be remembered, that it is sinners' resisting the methods of grace, which causes God to give them over: Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12, 13...*But my people would not hearken to my voice: and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels. O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!*

2. From what has been said, we may learn that it is madness and folly for poor sinners to use the means of grace under a notion of *doing their whole duty*, and so *pacify their consciences.* The means of grace are designed in the first place to convince sinners of their sinful, guilty, ruined state: and for them to forget, totally forget, this their *end*, and to go about to attend upon them under a notion of doing that *duty* which they owe to God, as something in lieu of that perfect obedience which the law requires, is quite to lose the benefit of the means of grace—yea, to thwart their very design—and tends to keep men from conviction and conversion, and seal them down in spiritual security. That which God directs them to

do, to the end their consciences might be more awakened, they do, that their consciences might be more quieted. The means which were appointed to make them more sensible of their need of Christ and grace, they use to make themselves the more insensible thereof.

3. Sinners are not to use the means of grace under a notion of making amends for their past sins, and recommending themselves to God, (Rom. x. 3.)—nor under a notion that by their strongest efforts they shall be ever able to renew their own nature, (Eph. ii. 1.)—nor under a notion they can do any thing at all to prevail with God to renew them, (Rom. xi. 35, 36.) But, on the contrary, in the use of the means of grace, they are to seek for and labor after a thorough conviction, that they can neither make any amends for their past sins, nor in the least recommend themselves to God—that they cannot renew their own nature, nor in the least move God to show them this mercy...to the intent, that being thus convinced of their ruined, helpless state, they may be prepared to look to the free mercy and sovereign grace of God, through Christ, for all things; which is the very thing that the gospel aims at, (Rom. iii. 9—26.) and which the means of grace are designed to promote, and bring them to; and to which the spirit of God, by his inward influences, does, in the use of means, finally bring all who are saved....Rom. vii. 8, 9....Gal. iii. 24.

For sinners to use the means of grace, under the other notions aforesaid, is practically to say, "We are not fallen, sinful, "guilty, helpless, undone creatures; nor do we need the re- "deemer or the sanctifier which God has provided; nor do "we lie at his mercy, or intend to be beholden to his mere "sovereign grace. If we have sinned, we can make amends "for it: if we have displeased God, we can pacify him again: "if we are wicked, we can become good: or, if we do as well "as we can, and then want any further help, God is obliged "to help us."

If, therefore, sinners would take the wisest course to be the better for the use of the means of grace, they must try to fall

in with God's design, and with the spirit's influences, and labor to see and feel their sinful, guilty, condemned, helpless, undone state. For this end, they must forsake vain company....leave their quarrelling and contention....drop their inordinate worldly pursuits, and abandon every thing which tends to keep them secure in sin, and quench the motions of the spirit; and for this end must they read, hear, meditate, and pray...compare themselves with God's holy law....try to view themselves in the same light that God does, and pass the same judgment upon themselves; that so they may be in a way to approve of the law, and to admire the grace of the gospel—to judge and condemn themselves, and humbly to apply to the free grace of God, through Jesus Christ, for all things, and through him to return to God.

Thus we have gone through what was proposed under this *third general head:* We have considered the necessity there was of satisfaction for sin, and of a perfect righteousness: We have considered what satisfaction for sin has been made, and what righteousness wrought out, and wherein their sufficiency consists: We have considered how the way of life has been opened by the means; and we have considered what methods God has actually entered upon for the recovery of lost sinners to himself. And thus, now, upon the whole, we see upon what grounds the great Governor of the world considered mankind as being in a perishing condition, and whence his designs of mercy originally took their rise, and what necessity there was for a Mediator and Redeemer, and how the way to life has been opened by him whom God has provided: and so may now pass to the next thing proposed.

SECTION VII.

SHOWING THE NATURE OF A GENUINE COMPLIANCE WITH THE GOSPEL.

IV. To show *the true nature of a saving faith in Christ.*—And because, by the whole, I am to explain the nature of the gospel, and of a genuine compliance therewith, therefore I will begin with a more general view of things, and afterwards proceed to a more distinct survey of faith in particular.

Now, a genuine compliance with the gospel, in general, consists in a spiritual and divine sight and sense of the great truths therein presupposed and revealed...and in a firm belief of those truths, and an answerable frame of heart ;—as is evident from II. *Cor.* iv. 3, 4, 5—I. *Thes.* ii. 13—*Mat.* xiii. 23—*John* viii. 32.

It is *divine light*, imparted by the spirit of God to the soul, which lays the foundation of all....*Mat.* xi. 25—*Gal.* i. 16—II. *Cor.* iii. 18. This *spiritual* and *divine light,* according to the language of St. Paul, *shines in the heart*, and consists in the *knowledge of* GLORY....II. *Cor.* iv. 6 ; that is, in a *sense* of MORAL BEAUTY—a *sense* of that beauty there is in the MORAL PERFECTIONS of GOD, and in all spiritual and divine things.... that HOLY BEAUTY which is peculiar to spiritual, and divine, and holy things ; of which every *unholy* heart is perfectly insensible....I. *John* i. 3, 6. And by *it*, things are made to appear to us, in a measure, as they do to God himself, and to the angels and saints in heaven: And so, by *it*, we are made to change our minds, and are brought to be of God's mind concerning things : And so we are hereby disposed to understand, believe, entertain, and embrace the gospel....*John* viii. 47.

GOD, the great Governor of the world, who sees all things as being what they are, does, in the gospel, consider mankind as *perishing*—as fallen, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone. He looks upon the original constitution with Adam as holy, just, and good ; and that, by and according to that constitution, he might have damned the whole human race, consistently with his goodness, and to the honor of his holiness and justice : He looks upon the law of nature as holy, just, and good ; and that, by and according to that, he might damn a guilty world, consistently with his goodness, and to the honor of his holiness and justice. Now, by this *divine light*, we are brought to look upon things as God does, and to have an answerable frame of heart.

Again—GOD, the great Governor of the world, who sees all things as being what they are, does, in the gospel, consider a

guilty world as lying at his mercy. He saw that he was under no obligations to pity them in the least, or in the least to mitigate their punishment—much less under any obligations to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life—and still much less under any obligations, by his holy spirit, to subdue and recover such obstinate rebels, who hate him and his Son....his law and his gospel, and are perfectly averse to a return. He saw a guilty world lie at his mercy, and that he was at liberty to have mercy or not to have mercy, according to his sovereign pleasure; and that it was fit, and becoming his glorious Majesty, to act as a sovereign in this affair. And now, by this *divine light*, we are brought to look upon things as God does, and to have an answerable frame of heart.

Again—God, the great Governor of the world, who sees all things as being what they are, at the same time that he designs mercy for a guilty world, does consider a Mediator as being necessary to answer the demands of the broken law, and secure the divine honor. In such a *perishing* condition he sees mankind—so guilty....so justly condemned, that it would be inconsistent with the divine perfections, and contrary to all good rules of government, to pardon and save such wicked, hell-deserving rebels, without some proper atonement for their sin, and suitable honor done to his law: But the honor of his holiness and justice...law and government, is sacred in his eyes, and of infinite importance, and must be maintained: better the whole world be damned than they in the least be sullied: And now, by this *divine light*, we are brought to look upon things as God does, and to have an answerable frame of heart.

Moreover, God, the great Governor of the world, who sees all things as being what they are, views his only begotten Son as a meet person for a mediator, and himself as having sufficient power to authorize him to the work. Of his sovereign, self-moving goodness, he, in his infinite wisdom, contrives the whole scheme...lays the whole plan, and puts his design in execution—the door of mercy is opened...the news of pardon and

peace is sent through a guilty world, and all are invited to return home to God through Jesus Christ: and God looks upon this way of salvation as being glorious for God, and safe for the poor sinner: And now, by this *divine light*, we are brought rightly to understand these things, and look upon them as God does, and believe them, and to have an answerable frame of heart.

Lastly, God, the great Governor of the world, does, in the gospel, consider our return unto him through Jesus Christ, not only as a *duty* to which we are under infinite obligations, but also as a *privilege* of infinite value; and, in this view of the case, he *commands* and *invites* us to return: And now, by this *divine light* we are brought to look upon this also as God does, and to judge it the *fittest* and *happiest* thing in the world to return unto him through Jesus Christ, and to have an answerable frame of heart: For,

By this *light* we come to have a right view of the most high God...to see him, in a measure, as the saints and angels in heaven do...to see him in his infinite greatness and majesty, and in the infinite glory and beauty of his nature: And hence we are made sensible that he is infinitely worthy of the highest esteem...reverence...love...delight, and of universal obedience: And hence we see, that we, in particular, are under infinite obligations to love him with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing; and that to do so is the happiest thing in the world; that not to do so, is infinitely wrong, and deserves an infinite punishment: And thus we see the grounds of the law of nature...the reasons from whence it results, and, with all our hearts, consent to it, and approve of it as holy, just, and good: And this naturally lays the foundation for us rightly to understand, and heartily to approve of the original constitution with Adam: And while we behold God in his infinite glory, and view the law as holy, just, and good, and see our infinite obligations perfectly to conform unto it—now our universal depravity and infinite ill desert appear in a clear and divine light: Hence it appears we lie at mercy, and that it is fit he should

have mercy on whom he will...that it becomes the Majesty of heaven to act as a sovereign in this affair: And it appears that there is no motive in us to excite his compassions, but infinitely to the contrary: and hence the heart is prepared to discern the freeness of divine grace, and to perceive that the goodness of the divine nature must be self-moving; and also to understand the need there is of a mediator to secure the divine honor: for creatures so bad appear too vile to be relieved, unless justice may first be satisfied; it is contrary to law, and contrary to reason, that they should. And while we view these things, and have a divine sense of them on our hearts, we are hereby prepared to understand the way of salvation by free grace through Jesus Christ, as revealed in the gospel: And now a sense of the glorious freeness of divine grace....the excellence and sufficiency of Christ, and the readiness of God to be reconciled to returning sinners through him, lays the foundation for faith and hope.* And all this while there is secretly enkindling in the heart a most genuine disposition to return home to God....to love him and live to him, arising from a sense of the ineffable glory and beauty of the divine nature: for he appears glorious in holiness, justice, goodness, and grace; and glorious in his sovereignty and in his majesty, as supreme Lord and high Governor of the whole world. Upon the whole, with utmost solemnity, as being in ourselves infinitely unfit for the divine favor, we venture our eternal ALL upon Jesus Christ as *Mediator*, relying on his worth and merits, and trusting to the mere free mercy of God through him, for par-

* All these things (although it takes considerable time to express them in order) may, for substance, instantly open to view, and the soul immediately acquiesce in the gospel-scheme and close with Christ;—*instantly*, I say, upon DIVINE LIGHT's being imparted to the soul: But the mind, in that solemn and awful hour, may especially fix only upon some particulars; and so a remembrance of these may remain, while other particulars, which were then in view, cannot afterwards be recollected. Hence, some may doubt whether their *first act of faith* was *right*. The best way to remove such fears, is to live in the exercise of faith every day; for when these views, and a consciousness of them, become habitual, our scruples will cease of course. The special nature of our *faith* may be learnt from the *after acts*, as well as by the *first act*; for the *after acts* will be of the same nature with the *first*, let our *faith* be true or false.

don, and grace, and glory; and hence are encouraged and emboldened, with our whole hearts, to return home to God through him, and give up ourselves to God forever, to love him and live to him, and live upon him forever, lamenting that ever we sinned against him, resolving to cleave to him with all our hearts, and never, never to depart from him....*Heb.* iv. 16, and x. 19—22—*Eph.* ii. 18—*John* xiv. 6—*Rom.* iii. 24, 25, 26. And thus, by this *divine light*, imparted by the spirit of God, is the soul finally brought to unite to Christ by faith, and to return home to God through him. John vi. 44, 45....*No man can come to me, except the Father draw him: They shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* And from what has been said concerning the nature of the gospel, it is self-evident that herein consists a genuine compliance therewith: For all this is only to see things as being what they are, and to be affected and act accordingly.

REMARK 1. This is peculiar to a genuine compliance with the gospel, and that whereby it is specifically different from all counterfeits, namely—its being founded in, and resulting from this *divine light;* whereby we are brought, not merely in speculation, but in heart, to look upon things as God does. He sees all things *as they are;* and therefore when any poor sinner is brought to a right view of things, i. e. to see them *as they are*, he must, by consequence, look upon them as God does. Now, all others being blind and ignorant in scripture-account, hence this true sight and sense of things is very peculiar and distinguishing: And hence we may observe that it is mentioned as being peculiar to the good-ground-hearers, in Mat. xiii. 25.... *That they heard the word, and* UNDERSTOOD *it.* And Christ intimates that none but his true disciples KNOW THE TRUTH.... *John* viii. 31, 32: And the gospel is again and again said *to be hid* from all others....*Mat.* xi. 25—II. *Cor.* iv. 3: And they only have it REVEALED unto them....*Mat.* xi. 25: They only have *the vail taken off from their hearts*....II. *Cor.* iii. 14—17: And they only *behold with* OPEN FACE....*ver.* 18.

2. This spiritual and divine light lays the foundation for a new kind of belief of the gospel. A sight of the divine beauty and glory of the gospel-scheme, convinces and assures the heart that it is divine, and indeed from God, and not a cunningly devised fable. This is an evidence peculiar to the regenerate, and, of all others, it is unspeakably the most satisfactory.—(See this largely explained and proved in Mr. *Edward*'s treatise on religious affecions, p. 182, 199.)

3. Regeneration, faith, repentance, and conversion, are, in their own nature, connected together, and so they are in this representation. In regeneration we receive this divine light.... this new spiritual sense of things. Our eyes are opened, and we are brought out of darkness into this *marvellous light ;* and so come to have a right view of God....of ourselves....of Christ ....and of the gospel-way of salvation by free grace through him. This spiritual illumination lays the foundation for faith, repentance, and conversion : It discovers the grounds of faith, of repentance, and conversion ; and we believe, we repent, and convert. *Repentance towards God,* and *faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, always go together....*Acts* xx. 21 : and the gospel calls sinners to *repent*, and *be converted*, as well as to *believe* in Christ....*Acts* iii. 19. Those, therefore, who seem to have much *light*, and *faith*, and *joy*, but have no *repentance*, nor do turn to God with all their hearts, are deluded.

4. Spiritual light and true faith are always in proportion. A spiritual sense of God....of ourselves....of Christ, and of the gospel way of salvation by free grace through him, lays the foundation for faith ; and faith naturally results therefrom—as has been observed, and as is evident from *John* vi. 45 : and therefore, from the nature of the case, they must be in equal degree in the heart : And therefore, those who pretend to live by faith, when they are spiritually blind and dead, do but deceive themselves. Nor is what they plead from Isai. l. x. at all to the purpose : *Who is among you that feareth the Lord...that obeyeth the voice of his servant...that walketh in darkness, and hath no light ? Let him trust in the Lord, and stay upon his God.*

Because, 1. The persons here spoken of were not spiritually blind and dead, but had a spiritual sense of God and divine things on their hearts; for they *feared the Lord*, and *obeyed his voice;* so that they lived in the exercise of grace, and walked in the ways of holiness, which, without spiritual light, had been impossible. And, 2. What they were in the dark about, was, how, or by what means, the children of Israel should ever be brought out of the *Babylonish* captivity, back again to *Zion:* which they knew God had promised, but they could see no way wherein it could be brought about. In this respect they *walked in darkness*, and could *see no light*, and therefore they are exhorted to put their *trust in the Lord*, whose wisdom, power, and faithfulness are infinite. This is evidently the meaning of the words, as is manifest from the scope and tenor of the prophet's discourse through all the ten preceding chapters, which was calculated for the support and comfort of the godly in the Babylonish captivity, by assuring them of a return.*—Nor is what is said about Abraham, that *against hope he believed in hope*....nor what is said by St. Paul—*We walk by faith, and not by sight*, any thing to their purpose; unless they suppose that Abraham and Paul, and the primitive christians in general, were as dead, and blind, and carnal, as themselves. The truth is, that this *blind faith* is the very thing which the Apostle *James* calls a *dead faith*.

5. Evangelical humiliation and true faith are likewise always in proportion. Evangelical humiliation consists in a sense of our own sinfulness, vileness, odiousness, and ill-desert, and in a disposition, thence resulting, to lie down in the dust full of

* The three first verses of the next chapter, (*Isai.* li. 1, 2, 3) do, I think, confirm the above interpretation of *Isai.* l. 10—although, I doubt not, the prophet's discourse, through the abovesaid ten chapters, has a farther look to the *Messiah's* kingdom, and our redemption out of *mystical Babylon*: But let the words be considered in either view, or only considered in themselves absolutely, it is plain they never were designed to comfort *stony-ground* hearers, when their religion is all worn out, and they become *dead, blind,* and *carnal,* and so full of doubts and fears: Nor do they mean to embolden such "firmly to believe they are in a good state, "though ever so much in the dark, i. e. though they see no grace in their "hearts, nor signs of any:" For the words are directed *only* to those *who fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servant.*

self-loathing and self-abhorrence, abased before the Lord, really accounting ourselves infinitely too bad ever to venture to come into the divine presence in our own names, or to have a thought of mercy from God on the account of our own goodness: And it is this which makes us sensible of our need of a mediator, and makes us desire to be found, not in ourselves, but in Christ—not having on our own righteousness, but his: No farther, therefore, than these views and this temper prevail in us, shall we truly discern any need of Christ, or be heartily inclined to have any respect to him as a mediator between God and us: There can, therefore, be no more of true faith in exercise, than there is of this true humility. When men, therefore, appear righteous in their own eyes, and look upon themselves as deserving well at the hands of God, on the account of their own goodness, they can feel no need of a mediator, nor at heart have any respect to Christ, under that character....Luke v. 31. This condemns the faith of the *self-righteous formalist*, who depends upon his being conscientious in his ways, and upon his sincerely endeavoring to do as well as he can, to recommend him to God: And this condemns, also, the faith of the *proud enthusiast*, who appears so *good* in his own eyes...so far from a legal spirit...so purely evangelical...so full of light and knowledge, humility and love, zeal and devotion, as that, from a sense of his own goodness, and how greatly beloved he is in the sight of God, he is encouraged and elevated, and feels greatly emboldened to come into the presence of God, and draw near, and come even to his seat, and use familiarity and boldness with God, as though he was almost an equal. Such are so far from any true sense of their need of Christ, as that they rather feel more fit to be mediators and intercessors in behalf of others, than to want one for themselves: And it is the way of such, from that great sense they have of their own goodness, to make bold with God, and to make bold with Christ, in their prayers, as if they felt themselves pretty nigh upon a level. Of all men in the world, I am ready to think that God looks upon these the worst, and hates them the most....(Luke xviii.

9—14—Isai. lxv. 5.) But did they know it, they would hate him as entirely as he does them. Hypocrites of all sorts fail in this point: they see no real need of Christ—they are not so bad but that, to their own sense and feeling, they might be pardoned and saved by the free mercy of God, without any mediator: Hence they do not understand the gospel; it is all foolishness to them....I. *Cor.* ii. 14.

6. It is a spiritual sense and firm belief of the truths of the gospel which encourages the heart to trust in Christ....*John* vi. 45. That the goodness of God is infinite, and self-moving—that Christ, as Mediator, has secured the honor of God, the moral Governor of the world, and opened a way for the free and honorable exercise of his grace—that through Christ, God, the supreme Governor of the world, is actually ready to be reconciled, and invites all, the vilest not excepted, to return to him in this way:—These truths, being spiritually understood and firmly believed, convince the heart of the safety of trusting in Christ, and encourage it so to do....*Heb.* x. 19....*Mat.* xxii. 4.

7. Saving faith consists in that entire trust, reliance, or dependance on Jesus Christ, the great Mediator, his satisfaction and merits, mediation and intercession, which the humbled sinner has, whereby he is emboldened to return home to God in hopes of acceptance, and is encouraged to look to and trust in God through him for that complete salvation which is offered in the gospel. The opposite to justifying faith, is a self-righteous spirit and temper, whereby a man, from a conceit of, and reliance upon his own *goodness*, is emboldened and encouraged to trust and hope in the mercy of God....*Heb.* x. 19, 23—*Luke* xviii. 9—14; and accordingly, when such see how *bad* they really are, their faith fails—they naturally think that God cannot find in his heart to show mercy to such.

8. *Faith emboldens the heart.* In a legal humiliation, which is antecedent to spiritual light, the sinner is brought to a kind of despair: The things which used to embolden him, do now entirely fail: he finds no good in himself—yea, he feels him-

self dead in sin ; and upon this his heart dies within him. *I was alive without the law once ; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died*....Rom. vii. 9 : And by spiritual light, in evangelical humiliation, his undone state, in and of himself, is made still more plain. But now faith emboldens the heart....begets new courage....lays the foundation for a new kind of hope—a hope springing entirely from a new foundation. Heb. x. 19, 22...*Having, therefore, brethren,* BOLDNESS *to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.* By faith the heart is emboldened—1. *To return home to God, in hopes of acceptance.* A spiritual sight and sense of the ineffable beauty of the divine nature begets a disposition to look upon it the fittest and happiest thing in the world to love God with all the heart, and be entirely devoted to him forever ; and enkindles an inclination to return, and everlastingly give up and consecrate ourselves unto him. " But may such a wretch as I be the Lord's ? Will he accept me ?" Now the believer, understanding the way of acceptance by Christ, and seeing the safety of it, ventures his ALL upon this sure foundation, and hereby is emboldened to return. Heb. xi. 6....*He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him ;* i. e. first—He must see what God is....behold him in his glory, or he cannot, in a genuine manner, desire to come to him : and secondly—He must see that he is ready to be reconciled unto and to save those, who, from a genuine desire to be his, do heartily return to him through the Mediator he has appointed ; or else he will not dare to come : But when both these are seen and believed, now the soul will return, and come and give up itself to God, to be the Lord's forever. 2. Faith in Christ emboldens the heart to look to and trust in the free grace of God through him, for all things that just such a poor creature wants—even for all things offered in the gospel to poor sinners. Heb. iv. 16....*Let us, therefore, come* BOLDLY *to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace.* Pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace are the two great benefits of the

new covenant; and these are the two great things which an enlightened soul feels the want of, and for which he is emboldened to come to God by Jesus Christ: *I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people*, saith the Lord in the new covenant; and *this is all my salvation, and all my desire*, saith the believer.

9. The word *faith*, in scripture, is evidently used in various senses: Or thus, there are various different exercises of a godly soul, all which in scripture are called *faith*—for I mean here to leave out all those sorts of *faith* spoken of in scripture, which the unregenerate man is capable of:—1. It is the way of godly men to live under a spiritual sense of God, his being and perfections, and government of the world, and the glory, reality, and importance of divine and eternal things—even under such a *living sense* of these things, as that they are *firmly believed*, and are made to influence them as though they were seen: Hence they are said to *look at things which are unseen*....II. Cor. iv. 18—*To see him who is invisible*....Heb. xi. 27—And are said *to walk by faith*....II. Cor. v. 7: And this seems to be the meaning of the word *faith*, as it is used in Heb. xi. where we read of what Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, did by *faith*. Their *faith* was *the substance of things hoped for, and evidence of things not seen*; i. e. it made divine and eternal things, as it were, subsist, in all their glory and importance, before their minds, and appear as evident as though they were seen, (ver. 1.)—2. It is the way of godly men to live under a spiritual sense of the divine all-sufficiency, whereby they are influenced *firmly to believe* that God is able to do all things for them, and be all to them, which they can possibly need in time and to eternity; by all which, they are influenced to live in a way of continual *dependance* upon him for all things: And this is what, in the book of Psalms and elsewhere, is called *trusting in the Lord, waiting* and *leaning upon the Lord, making him our refuge*. This temper is expressed in Psal. lxxiii. 25, 26...*Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my*

heart faileth: But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever—And ver. 28....*It is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord.*—3. It is the way of godly men to live under a spiritual sense of God, as the great Governor of the world, to whom it belongs to maintain the rights of the god-head, and the honor of the law; and under a sense of themselves as poor sinners, worthy only of destruction, according to law and justice, and too bad to be pitied or to have any mercy shown them, without some sufficient *salvo* to the divine honor; and under a sense of Christ as a Mediator appointed to be a propitiation for sin, to declare God's righteousness and secure the divine honor, and so open a way wherein God might be just and yet justify the sinner that believes in Jesus—even under such a living sense of these things, as that they are *firmly believed;* whereby they are influenced not to draw nigh to God in their own names, emboldened by their own goodness, but only in the name of Christ, *depending entirely* upon him, and *emboldened only* by his worth and merits, mediation and intercession, to look for acceptance in the sight of God: Hence, because of this *dependance*, they are said to pray in *Christ's name*...John xvi. 23—To have *access to God by him*....Eph. ii. 18—To *come to God through him*....Heb. vii. 25—*To believe in God by him*....I. Pet. i. 21—And are represented as being EMBOLDENED by his worth and merits, mediation and intercession, to approach the Majesty of heaven....*Heb.* iv. 16, and x. 19: And now this is called a *coming to* Christ....John vii. 37—A *receiving* him....John i. 12—A *believing in* Christ ....John iii. 15, 16—A *believing* ON Christ....John iii. 18, 36—A *believing in* HIS NAME....John i. 12—And a TRUSTING *in* Christ...Eph. i. 12, 13: And *this* is *that act of faith* by which we are justified and entitled to life, as is evident from Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26, where it is, by the Apostle, called *faith in Christ's blood.* The Apostle considers God as the righteous Governor of the world, (*chap.* i. 18)—all mankind as being *guilty before God*, (chap. iii. 9—19)—Christ as being *set forth to be a propitiation for sin*, (ver. 25) *That God might be just and yet justify*, &c.

(ver. 26)—And affirms that we are *justified by free grace through the* REDEMPTION *that is in Jesus Christ*, (ver. 24)—*by faith without the deeds of the law* (ver. 28), being considered in ourselves as UNGODLY, (chap. iv. 5): And this *justifying faith* he calls *faith in Christ's blood;* because it was principally by the *death* of Christ that the ends of moral government were answered, and so law and justice satisfied, and a way opened for the honorable exercise of divine grace. But although the word *faith* be thus used in scripture in these different senses, yet we are to remember that these various exercises of a godly soul are connected together, and always concomitant with one another—yea, and, in some respects, implied in each other: and perhaps sometimes all these actings of soul are designed by the word *faith;* nevertheless they are evidently, in their own nature, so distinct, as that they may be conceived of as distinct acts of the soul. And it may also be noted that the two first of these, viz. *a firm belief of divine truths*, and *a hearty reliance on the divine all-sufficiency*, are acts of faith common to angels as well as saints; but the last, which immediately respects Christ as Mediator, is peculiar to penitent, returning sinners: The two first are common to every holy creature; for all such do, in a firm belief of divine truths, live in an entire dependance upon God, the infinite fountain of all good: but the last is peculiar to *sinful* creatures, who, because they are *sinful*, need a mediator to make way for the honorable exercise of the divine goodness towards them. Those who never were sinners may receive all things, from the free grace and self-moving goodness of the divine nature, without a mediator; but those who have been sinners perhaps will receive all through a mediator, to eternity.

10. A heart to love God supremely, live to him ultimately, and delight in him superlatively....to love our neighbors as ourselves....to hate every false way....to be humble, meek, weaned from the world, heavenly-minded....to be thankful for mercies ....patient under afflictions....to love enemies....to forgive injuries, and, in all things, to do as he would be done by;—a heart for all this, I say, is always in exact proportion to the de-

gree of true faith : for the same views of our own wretchedness....of God....of Christ....of the way of salvation by free grace through him....of the glory, reality, and importance of divine and eternal things, which lay the foundation for true faith, and always accompany the exercise of faith, do, at the same time, lay the foundation for this divine temper : And besides, this divine temper is what every true believer feels to be the fittest and happiest thing in the world, and, as such, longs for it, and goes to God to have it increased and strengthened ; and, being unworthy to go in his own name,* he goes in Christ's name : so that the obtaining more and more of this divine temper is *one main end* of his exercising faith in Christ : And whatsoever he asks the Father in Christ's name, he receives. God is readier to give his holy spirit to such an one, than parents are to give bread to their children....*John* xvi. 23—*Mat.* vii. 11 : and therefore every true believer does obtain the end of his faith ; and not only has, but grows in this divine temper, and is governed by it, and brings forth fruit according to it : and thus *shows his faith by his works*, according to St. James's doctrine....*James* ii : And herein true faith stands distinguished from all counterfeits. Never had a hypocrite a spiritual sense of that ineffable beauty of the divine nature, which lies at

* *Unworthy to go in his own name.* As thus, if, in prayer, I offer up this petition, " Lord, enable me to love thee with all my heart!"—it implies, (1) That I do not love God with all my heart, notwithstanding the infinite obligations I am under to do so; for which defect I am infinitely to blame, and deserve an infinite punishment....to be instantly driven from God's presence forever, and spurned to hell as a creature fit only for destruction—(2) It implies that all the external manifestations which God has made of himself to me in his works and word, and all the external means he has used with me, are not able to win my heart wholly to God; so great is my sottishness and alienation from the Deity, and love to the world and sin : And now, surely, such a vile wretch cannot have a thought of any mercy from God, on the account of any goodness in me; yea, rather I am too bad to be pitied, unless there be some sufficient *salvo* to the divine honor. How, therefore, can God give me the greatest of gifts, even the sanctifying influences of his holy spirit, but through the great Mediator, consistently with his honor as moral Governor of the world : Now, therefore, being thus unworthy to go to God in my own name, I go in Christ's name; as knowing that, through him, God can exercise his infinite, self-moving goodness to the vilest of creatures, consistently with his honor; although law and justice call for their immediate destruction, considered as in themselves.

the foundation of all the experiences of the true saint, and from whence all true holiness originally springs. The *formalist* may, from legal fears and mercenary hopes, be so strict and consciencious in his ways, as to think himself a choice good man : and the *enthusiast*, from a firm persuasion of the pardon of his sins, and the love of Christ, may be so full of joy and love, zeal and devotion, as to think himself a most eminent saint : but there is nothing of the nature of true holiness in either ; for it is *self*, and nothing but *self*, that is the principle, centre, and end of all their religion : They do not believe in Christ, that through him they may return home to God, and be consecrated to him forever, and obtain grace to do all his will : They do not know God, or care for him, but are wholly taken up about their own interest. That *Moravian* maxim, " That salvation consists in the forgiveness of sins," exhibits the true picture of the heart of the best hypocrite in the world ; while that in II. *Cor.* iii. 18, is peculiar to the godly....*We all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.*

11, And lastly—In true believers there is a principle of faith, which abides and grows, and perseveres to the end. That spiritual sense of God...of themselves...of Christ, and of the gospel-way of salvation through him, which lays the foundation for the first act of faith, becomes habitual : They have a spiritual understanding to discern spiritual things, (I. *Cor.* ii. 12)—They were once *darkness*, but are now *light in the Lord ;* and hence they are called *children of the light and of the day*....Eph. v. 8—I. Thes. v. 5. Spiritual light does not come upon believers like flashes of lightning at midnight—now and then a flash, and then as dark as ever again ; but their light is habitual, like day-light : And from the first dawning of divine light at the hour of conversion, that day-break of heaven, their *light shines more and more*, year after year, *to the perfect day*....Prov. iv. 18 : The flying clouds in the day time, although they may hide the clear shining of the sun for a while, yet they do not make it dark as in the night ; yea, the thickest clouds are not able to do it.—

Believers are never destitute of a spiritual sense of God and Christ, and divine things, as other men are: They are *children* of the *light* and of the *day*—and not of the *night* and of *darkness:* The spirit of God does not come upon them by fits, as it did upon Balaam; but *dwells* in them, (Rom. viii. 9)—And they *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*....II. Pet. iii. 18: If at any time they should have no more sense of divine things than the unregenerate, they would be as much without grace—they would not differ from the *stony-ground-hearers*, who *fell away:* And now their divine light being thus habitual, growing and persevering, hence their faith is so too. Through the course of their lives it is their way to grow more and more sensible of their sinfulness.... the sinfulness of sin....their unworthiness, ill-desert, poverty, and absolute need of free grace and of Jesus Christ: And they also see more and more into the gospel-way of salvation....the glory and safety of it....its suitableness to exalt God, magnify the law, discountenance sin, humble the sinner, and glorify grace—and more and more come off from all self-dependance, to an entire reliance upon Jesus Christ, and the free grace of God through him; seeking to be found not in themselves, but in Christ—not as having on their own righteousness, but his.... *Phil.* iii. 7, 8, 9: They more fully approve of the law of nature and of the original constitution with Adam, as being holy, just, and good: they more fully get into a way of looking upon themselves as God does—as being naturally, and in themselves, fallen, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone: they see more and more of their infinite obligation to perfect holiness, and of the reasonableness of eternal damnation being threatened for the least sin, and of the insufficiency of all their best doings to make any satisfaction for sin; the grace of God, as revealed in the gospel, appears more rich, and free, and wonderful: they feel more and more of their need of Christ, his worth and merits, mediation and intercession; and of their utter unfitness to approach the Majesty of heaven any other way but by him:—they feel themselves

more full of wants, and farther off from any worthiness to receive, and yet more and more into the temper of humble beggars, and into a way of coming to God more entirely in Christ's name. At first conversion such a temper begins; and this temper grows like *the mustard-seed*, and spreads like *the leaven*, and is like *a well of living water*, which is never dry, but is *springing up into everlasting life*....Mat. xiii. 31—33....John iv. 14: And thus the true believer *abides in Christ, as a living branch does in the vine*...John xv—And *lives the life he lives in the flesh, by faith on the Son of God*...Gal. ii. 20—Being *kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation*...I. Pet. i. 5.

And this is the thing (I may observe by the way) which makes grace in the heart more plainly discernible, and its difference from all counterfeits more clearly manifest; and which, therefore, clears up to believers the spiritual state of their souls ....answers all doubts...removes all difficulties, and brings them to be settled and satisfied as to their good state. Many spend their lives in searching whether their *law-work* was right.... whether their *first act of faith* was right, &c....But there is nothing like growing in grace, to put it out of doubt that we have grace, and to keep our evidences clear: And indeed this is the only way....II. *Pet.* i. 5—10.

And thus we see, in *general*, wherein a genuine compliance with the gospel does consist, and *particularly* what is the nature of a saving faith: And, from what has been said, we may be able to distinguish true faith from every counterfeit; particularly, from what has been said, we may easily see the falseness of these two sorts of faith, whereby thousands are deceived and ruined.

1. *The legal hypocrite's* faith, who, being entirely devoid of the divine life, and of those spiritual views of God...of himself...of Christ, and of the way of salvation, which the true believer has, is only animated by self-love, the fear of hell, and the hope of heaven, to attend upon the external duties of religion, and to try to love God and be sincere, in hopes of acceptance in the sight of God, if he endeavors to do as

well as he can. He thinks God has promised to accept such, and that it would not be just for God to require more of him than he can do: He does not see how bad he is; he hates to think of lying at the mere mercy of God, and cannot endure the doctrine of divine sovereignty; he is quite insensible of his need of free grace and of Jesus Christ: However, he says, he trusts wholly in the merits of Christ for eternal life, and does not pretend to merit any thing by all his doings: And thus being quieted with the hopes of heaven, he goes on in the rounds of duty, a stranger to real communion with God, and to all the exercises of the divine life. He does duties enough just to keep his conscience quiet, and has faith enough just to keep him from seeing that he rests entirely upon his own righteousness: and, by the means, his duties and his faith serve only to keep him secure in sin, and insensible of his perishing need of Jesus Christ and of converting grace.

Let me expostulate the case a little with such a one: And, *First*, Can a man sincerely comply with the gospel, when, at the same time, he does not cordially approve of the law, as holy, just and good, seeing the gospel, in its whole constitution, is evidently founded upon that supposition? You do not like the law; you think it is unjust. The law requires you to love God with all your heart, (Mat. xxii. 37.) and threatens damnation for the least sin, (Gal. iii. 10.) But you say it is not just for God to require more than you can do, and then damn you for not doing: but now the gospel does not mean to make *void* this law, but to *establish* it....Rom. iii. 31: It would be impossible, therefore, if you did but rightly understand the case, that you should like the gospel any better than you do the law. And, *Secondly*, Do you think that God will pardon you, when, at the same time, you will not acknowledge the law to be holy, just, and good, by which you stand condemned? What, pardon you, when you justify yourself, and condemn his law!—What, pardon you, when you will not own you need a pardon! Yea, when you stand to it, it would not be fair to punish you! Yea, when you are ready to fly in the very face of the law and

of the law-giver, and to cry out, *injustice, injustice!* No, no, proud, stubborn, guilty wretch, you must come down first, and lie in the dust before the Lord, and approve the law in the very bottom of your heart, and own the sentence just by which you stand condemned....*Luke* xviii. 13—*Rom.* iii. 19. You must come down and own the law to be good, or else God must come down and own the law to be bad: Or, if God insists upon it that the law is holy, just and good, and you still insist upon it that it is not, it is impossible that God should pardon you, or that there should be any reconciliation: God must, of necessity, hate you, because you hate his law; and you will forever hate God for making such a law. And, *Thirdly*, How can you pretend, all this while, to trust only in Christ for pardon and eternal life, when, as it is plain, from your own words, you see no need of Christ? For if, as you say, "God "cannot justly require any more of you than you can do," what do you want Christ for? You can do enough yourself. Do you want Christ to make satisfaction for your short-comings and imperfections? But, according to your scheme, God cannot require any more satisfaction than you can make yourself; for this would be to require more than you can do, and to damn you for not doing. Do you want him to purchase the favor of God and eternal life? But you can do all that God can require; for you can do what you can do, and that, according to your scheme, is all that God can require: Or, do you want Christ to purchase an abatement of the law? But if Christ had never died, you do not think that God could, in justice, require more of you than you can do: What need, therefore, upon your scheme, was there of Christ? And did he not die in vain? *For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain*...Gal. ii. xxi. Now, can your faith in Christ be any more than a *mere fancy*, when, as it is evident, you see no need of him? And, besides, *Fourthly*, What good does your faith do you? Does it *work by love?* Does it *purify your heart?* Does it *overcome the world?*...Why, nothing less. It only serves to keep you secure and quiet in an unre-

newed state, and to make you hope all is well, while you keep on in a round of external duties, strangers to God and the divine life: In a word, your duties and your faith join together to keep conscience asleep, and to render you insensible of your need of Christ and of converting grace...*Rom.* ix. 30, 31, 32. Oh, how sad it is, so many thousands should be deceived in so plain a case! It can surely be attributed to nothing short of this, that *men love darkness rather than light;* they love to frame such a scheme of religion in their heads, as suits the temper of their hearts: And, because their scheme suits them, therefore they firmly believe it to be divine. But to proceed,

2. From what has been said, we may easily see the falseness of *the evangelical hypocrite's* faith, who, although he makes a much greater show, and is more confident, yet has not a jot better foundation: He has been greatly awakened, perhaps, and terrified, and seemingly brought off from his own righteousness, and humbled, and then has received great light and comfort, and has had many an hour of joy and ravishment. For thus was the case—In the depth of his darkness and sorrow, light shined all around him; and, to his thinking, he saw heaven opened, and the Lord sitting upon his throne, and Christ at his right hand, and heard those words, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven: Fear not, little flock, it is my Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Oh, thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors,* &c.—Or, it may be, he saw Christ on the cross, with his blood running from his side, and hands and feet; or, perhaps he saw a light in his chamber: It may be, he had one scripture, and, it may be, ten or twenty going, until he was as full as he could hold, and even ready to cry, *Lord, stay thy hand:* As to all these things, there is an endless variety—but, in the following particulars, there is a greater agreement. (1.) They have a discovery of Christ's love to them in *particular*—that

he died for them in *particular*—that their sins are pardoned, &c. (2.) The essence of their first act of faith consists in a firm persuasion that their sins are forgiven—that Christ died for them in particular, or the like. (3.) All their after-discoveries and after-acts of faith are of the same nature with the first. (4.) This faith, from a principle of self-love, naturally fills them full of joy, and love, and zeal, and lays the foundation of all their good frames, and of all their religion. (5.) Doubting the goodness of their state, when they are dead and carnal, is, in their account, unbelief, and a great sin, and to be watched and prayed against, as a thing of the most destructive tendency. Now, some, who have a few discoveries, do, in a few months, lose all their religion, and come to feel and live much like the rest of the world: Others hold out longer.—Some, after they have lain dead one, two, three, five or ten years, just as it happens, will have what they call a new discovery, and be as full as ever—while others continue in their irreligious courses.

And here I may observe—(1.) That the greater discoveries (as they call them) they have, the more proud and conceited they are, and the more do they want to have all the town admire them.—(2.) The longer they continue to be *lively*, the more do they grow in pride and self-righteousness; and feeling themselves to be exceedingly good, they are emboldened to make very free with the Almighty, as being his peculiar favorites, and the best of men: *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men.*—(3.) And yet it is natural to esteem themselves some of the most humble creatures in the world.—(4.) It is impossible to convince them of their error; because the immediate witness of the spirit of God, as they think, assures them that they are right: and, therefore, all who do not look upon things and feel just as they do, are certainly blind and carnal, and so not to be regarded: they are bound to believe God before man. Urge *scripture* against them, and they are unmoved; because the spirit does not tell them that it means so: The plainest texts are not regarded, if contrary to their spirit. Urge

reason against them, and demonstrate a point ever so clearly, and they are unmoved; because that is all *carnal reason.* Take much pains with them, and be ever so kind and friendly, and they are the more established; because they think they are *persecuted:* Or, if they are sometimes shocked, and almost convinced, yet they are, in a few days, more settled than ever, by a new discovery, and a multitude of scriptures, misapplied by the prince of darkness, assuring them that they are right. And now they resolve never to doubt again, and get invincibly set in their way.—(5.) If, after a while, they lose all their religion, and are dead, and lie dead for whole months and years together, yet still they are as confident as ever: "For," say they, "David, and Solomon, and Peter fell, and the best are "dead sometimes; and how long a good man may lie dead "none can tell: God may leave his children out of sovereign-"ty, and without Christ we can do nothing; we must wait for "the spirit, and not call God's faithfulness into question, be-"cause of our deadness—as if his faithfulness depended upon "our good frames." And so now, having, as they suppose, Christ to pardon their sins, and save their souls, and some lust to content their hearts, they sleep on secure and quiet: Or, if they are terrified at any time, and begin to doubt, *O thou of little-faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?* or some such scripture, will quiet and hush all to sleep again: And thus, and after this sort, things go with them. And now out of such rotten hearts grow up all the Antinomian, Familistic, and Quakerish errors which have troubled the christian church: For they get their principles of religion, not out of the *Bible*, but out of their *experiences;* and are careful to cut out a scheme in their heads, to suit the religion of their hearts: and because it suits them, therefore they firmly believe it. And because their scheme is not *rational*, and cannot bear to be examined by *reason*, therefore they cry down *reason*, and say it is *carnal:* And they cry down *human learning;* and the more ignorant, the more devout. And because their scheme is not contained in the *scriptures*, therefore they have no regard to the *plain meaning* of

scripture, but turn all into *allegories*, and what they call the *spiritual meaning;* and so run into an hundred whims, such as best suit the temper of their hearts.

Now the great misery of this sort of hypocrites is, that notwithstanding all their terrors, yet they were never thoroughly convinced of their fallen, sinful, guilty, undone state by nature: and, notwithstanding all their discoveries, yet they are still spiritually blind, and neither know God, nor themselves, nor Christ, nor the gospel-way of salvation by free grace through him: and, notwithstanding all their confidence, and joy, and high religious frames, yet they are as destitute of faith, repentance, and holiness, as ever they were: And it is a LIE, which the *father of lies* has made them believe—which lies at the bottom of all their religion, and is the very foundation of it all. All their purest joy, and love, and zeal, arise from their *faith:* All their *faith* consists in *believing that their sins are forgiven:* And all the foundation which their *faith* is originally built upon, is an *immediate revelation*—the truth of which they dare not call in question, for fear of giving the lie to the holy spirit, from whom, they say, they know it came. But how could the spirit of God reveal it to them, that *Christ loved them*, and that *their sins were forgiven*, and hereby lay the foundation for their *first act* of faith, whenas, *before* the *first act* of faith, they were *actually* under *condemnation*...the *wrath of God*, and the *curse of the law?*...John iii. 18, 36—Gal. iii. 10. The thing revealed to them was not true; and therefore was not from God, but from the devil. Now this false revelation laid the foundation for their faith, and their faith laid the foundation for their joy, and for all their religion. A spiritual sight and divine sense of the great *truths* presupposed and revealed in the gospel, is the foundation of the godly man's faith and holiness; but a particular thing, no where revealed in the Bible, is their foundation—yea, a *falsehood* that is directly contrary to what the scriptures plainly teach: And yet, alas, they know they are right; they are, they say, as certain of it as they are of their own existence. How great is the power of delusion! How awful is

the case of a poor creature forsaken of God! II. Thes. ii. 10, 11, 12....*They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved: And, for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a* LIE....*That they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* —But to conclude,

From what has been said concerning the nature of a true faith and a genuine compliance with the gospel, we may not only see the falseness of these two sorts of faith, but also of all other counterfeits, which are almost in an endless variety: For, between these two extremes of a *legal* and *evangelical* hypocrite, there lie a thousand bye-paths, in which poor sinners wander to everlasting perdition; in the mean while, blessing themselves that they are neither Arminians nor Antinomians, nor deluded as such and such are—although they neither know God, nor themselves, nor Christ, nor the way of salvation through him; and really are as destitute of faith, repentance, and holiness, as the most deluded creature in the world.

SECTION VIII.

SHOWING WHAT IS IMPLIED IN THE EVERLASTING LIFE PROMISED TO BELIEVERS, AND HOW FAITH INTERESTS US IN CHRIST.

I am now, in the last place,

V. To consider *the promise of everlasting life*, which is, in the gospel, made to true believers. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not* PERISH, *but have* EVERLASTING LIFE. In this *everlasting life* is implied,

1. *The everlasting love and favor of God.* Whereas, *by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners*, and *judgment came upon all to condemnation*, by virtue of the original constitution with Adam, (*Rom.* v. 18, 19,)—and whereas, by and according to the law of nature, *the whole world stands guilty before God*, (Rom. iii. 19,)—Now, by virtue of a new constitution, established by the God of heaven, the great Governor of the world, called the *gospel*, or covenant of grace, it is appointed, and, as

it were, confirmed by the broad seal of heaven, that any, whosoever they are, among all the guilty race of Adam, who fall in with this gospel-proposal, and venture their ALL upon this new plan....this new foundation....this precious corner-stone, Jesus Christ, the great Mediator between God and man, shall thenceforth stand free from that double condemnation, and be entitled unto the everlasting love and favor of God, the great Governor of the world. John iii. 18—Rom. v. 1, 2....*Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

2. The other part of this everlasting life consists in and results from *the everlasting indwelling of the holy spirit as a sanctifier.* This, which Adam lost by the fall, is, upon our union with Christ, the *second Adam*, by virtue of this new constitution, restored, never to be lost any more. John vii. 38...*He that believeth on me, as the scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* Ver. 39...*This spake he of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive:* And therefore the *gift of the holy ghost* is, by the Apostles, (Acts ii. 38.) promised upon the condition of faith:* And, therefore, as God did, of old, dwell in the holy of holies in the Jewish temple, in the cloud of glory, so now, henceforth, does he dwell in the believer's heart by his holy spirit, as a vital principle and spring of divine life there...John xv. 1—5: And hence believers are called *the temple of God*...I. Cor. iii. 17. The spirit of God is said to *dwell in them*, (Rom. viii. 9)—to *lead them*, (ver. 14)—to give them an everlasting freedom from the power of sin, (ver. 2): so that *sin shall not have dominion over*

* From the *nature* of *justifying faith*, it is evident that *regeneration* must be *prior* to the *first act* of it; but although the sinner be *regenerated* by the gracious influences of the holy spirit *before* faith, yet it is *after* faith and union with Christ that the soul has a *covenant-right* to the indwelling of the holy spirit; which *covenant-right* lays a foundation for the indwelling of the holy spirit to be *constant* and *everlasting;* and this lays a foundation for an *abiding* principle and proper *habit* of grace: So that, although *regeneration* be *before* faith, yet a *confirmed habit* of grace is *after*. It results from our union with Christ....*John* xv. 1—5: And is in scripture promised upon the condition of faith....*John* v. 24. and vii. 38.

them....Rom. vi. 14: *And the water* (says Christ) *which I will give you, shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life*....John iv. 14.

It is plain, from the whole tenor of the gospel, that the *everlasting love and favor of God,* together with the *everlasting indwelling of the holy spirit as a sanctifier*, which are the two great things which a poor sinner wants, are the two great things promised in the covenant of grace. St. Paul, having explained the nature of the gospel-way of salvation by free grace through Jesus Christ, and shown that faith is the only condition of the new covenant, in the four first chapters of his epistle to the Romans, proceeds to show the benefits accruing to believers.—And *first*, they are *justified*, and have *peace* with God, (*chap.* v.) *Secondly*, they are delivered from the power of sin, (*chap.* vi.) And although they are, in this life, continually in a state of spiritual conflict and warfare, (*chap.* vii.) yet they are influenced, and led, and governed by the spirit of God, which dwells in them, (*chap.* viii.) And now all things shall work for their good, and they shall be brought to glory at last, (ver. 28—39.) So again, see both these summed up in *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12....*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.*—Here is the everlasting indwelling of the holy spirit, together with what results therefrom: *For I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more*....ver. 12. And here is the everlasting love and favor of God.

And now, seeing, by this new constitution...this covenant of grace, true believers are thus *entitled* to the everlasting love and favor of God, and to the everlasting indwelling of the holy spirit, as sanctifier, in the perfect enjoyment of both which, *eternal life*, in heaven, will consist; hence, therefore, they are

said to *have life*, yea, to *have eternal life*, immediately upon their believing in Christ. I. John v. 12....*He that hath the Son, hath* LIFE—John iii. 36....*He that believeth on the Son hath* EVERLASTING LIFE—John v. 24....*Hath* EVERLASTING LIFE, *and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from* DEATH *unto* LIFE—John xvii. 3....*This is* LIFE ETERNAL, *that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Eternal life is begun in them, and heaven begins to dawn in their souls: And believers, being thus made the subjects of the everlasting love and favor of God, and of the everlasting indwelling of the holy spirit, are hence called *the children of God*....John i. 12: For God loves them as *children*, and they love him as a *Father:* And this *filial frame of spirit*, whereby they are disposed to reverence, fear, love, trust in, and obey God as a *Father*....live upon him, and live to him as a *Father;*—I say, this *filial frame of spirit* is called *the spirit of adoption*, in opposition to that *servile frame of spirit* they used to be under the bondage of, *before faith*, and *before they had received the Holy Ghost.* Rom. viii. 15....*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

And this filial frame of spirit being *peculiar* to believers.... that which none but believers have, and which yet is common to all believers; and this filial frame of spirit being that wherein believers bear *the image of their heavenly Father, each one resembling the children of a King;* for they view things, according to their measure, as God does, and love what God loves, and make his interest their interest, and are taken up with the same designs;—I say, this filial frame of spirit being such a *peculiar* and *remarkable* thing, and that wherein they so nearly *resemble* God, and being also the immediate product of the indwelling and influence of the holy spirit, therefore, in scripture, it is spoken of as the distinguishing badge of a true believer.... as a *mark* whereby God's children and Christ's *sheep* are to be known. This is what is called *the seal of the spirit*, in Eph. i. 13. And this *seal* is the *witness*, *evidence*, and *proof* which

the holy spirit gives to our *consciences*, *that we are the children of God*....Rom. viii. 16. This filial frame of spirit is what *satisfies* and *assures* the children of God. They feel the very temper of children towards God: They feel a heart to reverence and fear, love and honor him as a Father—a heart to go to him....to trust in him....to be in subjection to him, and obey him as a Father: And by this they know they are his children.

Marvellous is the change which the poor sinner passes through in that awful hour of inexpressible solemnity, when he first comes into the awful presence of the dread Majesty of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ, the glorious Mediator, venturing his ALL for ETERNITY upon this sure foundation. And now, from this time forward, he is quite another creature, under quite new circumstances: As when orphan children, left without a guardian or a guide, from running into riot and indulging themselves in all extravagances, are taken and brought into the family of a wise and good man, who makes them his children ....instills new principles and a new temper into them, and puts them under a new discipline, by which all things become *new* to them—so, here, from being without God and without hope in the world, and from running to eternal ruin, we are taken and brought into God's family....have a new temper given to us.... have a new father, and are under a new government. God's fatherly eye is upon us every hour, and he is daily laboring to bring us up to his hand....to train us up to his mind....to make us such as he would have us be. He contrives, and takes all manner of ways, by his spirit, and by his providence, and by his word, to make us more serious, spiritual, and heavenly.... more humble, weaned from the world, and devoted to God. And thus *he purgeth us, that we may bring forth more fruit*.... John xv. 2: He enlightens...he leads...he teaches....he quickens...he strengthens....he comforts us....*Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12—*Isai.* 40, 31: When we want it, he instructs us...I. *John* 2. 27 —*James* i. 5: When we want it, he corrects us....*Heb.* xii. 6: And when we need it, he encourages and comforts us...II. *Cor.*

xii. 9. When we love him and keep his commands, he manifests himself unto us....*John* xiv. 21 : And when our spiritual enemies are too strong for us, and our heart and our strength fail, our steps are slipping, our feet just gone—in the distressing juncture he puts underneath his everlasting arms....he takes us by the right hand....he prevents us by his grace ; and before we are aware, we have gotten the victory, and begin to say, *Whom have we in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth we desire besides thee. Our flesh and our heart faileth ; but God is the strength of our heart, and our portion forever :* And O, *It is good for us to draw near to God*....Psalm lxxiii : And if at any time we forsake him, he follows after us, and *visits our transgressions with the rod*, and *our iniquities with stripes ;* but never breaks his covenant with us....*Psalm* lxxxix. 30—34. *He hedges up our way with thorns*, and brings us to a hearty return ....*Hos.* ii. 6, 7 : And thus *we are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation*....I. Pet. i. 5—and finally are brought to the full vision and perfect fruition of God to all eternity....*Rom.* viii. 30.

Now *faith* in Christ entitles us to all this, by virtue of that divine constitution which we call *the gospel*, or *covenant of grace*—by virtue of that new and living way of salvation which God, the great Governor of the world, has contrived and provided, ratified and confirmed, the sum of which is contained in John iii. 16—Which constitution God has been pleased to confirm by an *oath*, to the intent *we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us.* He has said, *He that believeth shall be saved*, and he has confirmed it by an *oath*, to remove all doubt, and to give the highest possible assurance....*Heb.* vi. 17, 18. And now, being assured that this way of salvation may be depended upon, as being contrived and confirmed by God himself ; hence, here we rest secure and safe. We know that this new constitution must be from God, because the whole plan is altogether divine : it is just like God : God cannot but be pleased with it : it is perfectly suited to exalt God....to magnify the law....to dis-

countenance sin....to humble the sinner, and to glorify grace: and if sinners are ever saved, it is infinitely fit that they should be saved in such a way, and in no other. There is such an apparent resemblance of the divine nature and perfections in this whole plan, as is sufficient to assure the heart that it is from God. None but God could be the author of it....II. *Cor.* iv. 3, 4, 6: And being, in the *first* place, assured that it is from God, we have, in the *second place*, the highest assurance that God will abide by it, and act according to it: For, *first*, we have his *promise;* and *secondly*, we have his *oath:* So that there can be no reasonable doubt remaining. And now, upon this foundation, does the true believer build all his hopes and expectations—here is the bottom of all: For if I am assured that, by divine grace, I do rightly understand the gospel, and am brought to a genuine compliance therewith, now, then, I am *safe*, if the *gospel* be TRUE, and if that way of salvation may CERTAINLY be depended on—if it be no *cunningly devised fable*, but a way of God's own contrivance, and which he will CERTAINLY abide by. A clear, rational, spiritual conviction and assurance of this, is the very *anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast*....Heb. vi. 19.

If mankind had remained in a state of *pure nature*, i. e. under no constitution at all....under nothing but merely *the law of nature*, i. e. to have been guided and directed to their duty, and to have been rewarded or punished by God, only and merely by and according to the reason and nature of things—if this had been the case, then, so long as every individual should be continued in being by God, and should continue to love God with all his heart, and obey him in every thing, so long every individual would be perfectly happy: But then, God might, without injustice, let one or all drop into non-existence, if he pleased, and when he pleased, although perfectly holy...*Job* xxii. 2, and xxxv. 7: Or, if he was pleased to continue one and all in being forever, yet, at what time soever any should commit the least sin, that soul should immediately sink down into an eternal hell....*Rom.* vi. 23—a thousand years of perfect obe-

dience, by the mere law of nature, not entitling to any promise for the time to come. God's giving and continuing being to us, and granting us advantages to know, and love, and serve him, would render us infinitely indebted to God; but our knowing, loving, and serving God could not bring him at all into debt to us....*Rom.* xi. 35, 36. Our doing so would naturally render us happy, so long as we should continue to do so; but if, at any time, we should be guilty of the least defect, all would be lost, and we undone forever.

But then, by and according to the constitution with Adam, things were placed upon another footing. The eternal welfare of mankind was suspended upon another condition: for, according to this constitution, if Adam, the public head and representative of mankind, had remained obedient for some certain period of time, he and all his posterity would, by the free and gracious promise of God, have been entitled to everlasting life; as, on the other hand, if he sinned, all would be exposed to eternal death. But now, FAITH *in Christ* entitles us to eternal life, by virtue of a new constitution, called the *gospel*, or *covenant of grace*, made and confirmed by the God of heaven.

The perfect obedience of Adam, had he stood, would not have entitled us to eternal life, notwithstanding he was our natural head, if he had not been made our representative by a divine constitution: so the perfect obedience and sufferings of Christ would not have freed us from condemnation and entitled us to eternal life, whatever dependance we might have had upon him, if, by a divine constitution, it had not been appointed and confimed that *he that believeth shall be saved.*

By and according to *the law of nature*, our own personal obedience would have recommended us to the favor of God, and laid the foundation of our happiness, so long as we should have continued in a state of sinless perfection.—By *the first covenant*, the constitution with Adam, his perfect obedience, through his appointed time of trial, would, by virtue of that constitution or covenant, have entitled us to everlasting life.—By *the second covenant*, the perfect righteousness of Christ, the *second Ad-*

am, entitles all true believers to everlasting life, by and according to this new and living way.

A perfect righteousness was necessary according to the law of nature; and a perfect righteousness is insisted upon in both covenants. According to the law of nature, it was to be performed *personally;* but, according to both covenants, it is appointed to be performed by a *public head.*—According to the first covenant, we were to have been interested in the righteousness of our public head, by virtue of our union to him as his posterity, for whom he was appointed to act.—According to the second covenant, we are interested in the rigteousness of Christ, our public head, by virtue of our union to him by faith.

Our *faith* is that whereby we *unite* to Christ;—the act is an *uniting act.* We disunite, separate from, and renounce *that* to which we before were united, and did close with, and placed our hopes upon, *viz.* our own righteousness—and are no more emboldened by *that*, to come into the presence of God: And we unite to Christ, desiring to be found, not in ourselves, but in him—not in our own righteousness, but in his....*Phil.* iii. 8, 9: And from him we take encouragement to draw nigh to God; we come in HIS NAME....*Heb.* iv. 16. And now, by virtue of a divine constitution, established by the Governor of the world, all, who thus unite to Christ by faith, are considered as being one with him, so as to have an interest in what he has done and suffered in the character of a Mediator, as a public person, so as, upon the account thereof, to be pardoned, and received to favor, and entitled to eternal life....*Rom.* v. 18, 19—*Eph.* i. 6—*Rom.* iii. 24, 25.

And now, this faith....this uniting act, being the *condition*, the *only condition*, required on our part, by the covenant of grace, we being *justified by faith without the deeds of the law*, hence *faith* is said to be *imputed to us for righteousness*....Rom. iv—for *righteousness*, i. e. for that whereby we *stand right* according to the tenor of the new covenant, i. e. for a *full compliance* with the condition of the new covenant. As perfect obedience was a compliance with the covenant of works, so faith

is a compliance of the covenant of grace. Now, as perfect obedience, through his whole time of trial, would have been imputed to Adam for *righteousness*, i. e. for a *full* compliance with the condition of that covenant; so now faith is imputed for *righteousness*, i. e. for a *full* compliance with the condition of this covenant: For St. Paul had but just been proving that we are *justified by faith* ALONE, *without the deeds of the law*; and now *this* being the ONLY condition required, therefore he says *it* is accounted as a *full* compliance with the new covenant —i. e. it is *imputed for righteousness*. It being the *only* thing required as a condition of life, by the covenant of grace, hence it is looked upon in the sight of God accordingly, as being a *full* compliance with that covenant. The covenant of works insisted upon perfect obedience, because Adam was to have been justified merely by, and wholly upon the account of, his own virtue and goodness: And the covenant of grace insists upon *faith alone*, *without the deeds of the law*, because now we are justified, merely by, and wholly upon the account of, Christ's virtue or righteousness, without regard to any goodness in us: *But to him that* WORKETH NOT, *but believeth on him that justifieth the* UNGODLY, *his faith is counted for righteousness*, (Rom. iv. 5)—i. e. for a FULL compliance with the new covenant, *without the deeds of the law:* For, as to a *legal righteousness*, Christ is *the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe*....Rom. x. 5: And, in that sense, we are not to be found in our own righteousness, but in his....*Phil.* iii. 8.

Thus, according to the law of nature, every man would have been justified by his own personal righteousness: and according to the first covenant, every child of Adam would have been justified by Adam's righteousness, as public head: and according to the second covenant, every believer is to be justified by Christ's righteousness, as another public head. The first of these ways takes its rise from the reason and nature of things; but the second and third from the positive appointment of God. The angels, it seems, were dealt with according to the first of these ways—only their state of probation, through

grace, not to be perpetual ; for, no doubt, those that stood are now in a confirmed state : but mankind are dealt with according to the second and third.

The first of these ways a fallen world pretend some liking to ; but the other two have given great offence. " How is it right " we should be condemned for Adam's sin ? Or with what " propriety can we be justified on the account of Christ's right- " eousness ?" is the language of very many. " It is unjust to " condemn me for the sin of another, and absurd to justify me " for another's righteousness," say they. And as to the first of these ways, they would have the law abated in what it requires, and quite disannulled as to its threatening death for the least sin : They would have what they call sincere obedience admitted as a condition of life, and repentance to be accepted in case of sin : so that an apostate world are naturally equally at enmity against the first, second, and third, rightly understood : For they think it full as unjust that God should damn us for the least defect of perfect obedience, as for Adam's first sin. And it is nothing but divine light can bring the heart of a sinner sincerely to approve of the law of nature, of the constitution with Adam, and of the gospel with Christ : For, (I. Cor. ii. 14) *the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* He does not discern the ground and reason of the law of nature, being blind to the infinite beauty of the divine perfections : and so is incapacitated to have a right view and sense of the nature of the first covenant or the second. And being a stranger and an enemy to God, he also naturally doubts whether he has full power and rightful authority to make such constitutions : he dislikes the constitutions—he questions God's authority to make such : their being so plainly held forth in the Bible, tempts many to call even the truth of that into question ; and some are driven quite to open infidelity.

There is a secret infidelity in the hearts of unregenerate men. They do not love that divine scheme of truths revealed

in the Bible, nor cordially receive it for true. Men love to cut out a scheme of religion in their heads, to suit the temper of their hearts: And from this root do all the false and erroneous principles which fill the christian world originally take their rise, (II. *Thess.* ii. 10, 11, 12): But when he that commanded the light to shine out of darkness shines in the heart, and gives spiritual light, then the reasonableness, beauty, and glory of the whole scheme appear, and the very resemblance of the divine perfections is to be seen in every branch of it: and now it is cordially believed, (*John* viii. 47): And hereby a solid foundation is laid for a real conformity to the law, and a genuine compliance with the gospel; in both which true religion does consist.

Thus we have gone through what was proposed: And we see why God, the great Governor of the world, did consider mankind as perishing, fallen, sinful, guilty, justly condemned, helpless, and undone: and we see that his design of mercy originally took its rise from the mere self-moving goodness of his nature, and sovereign good pleasure: and we see the necessity there was of a Mediator, and how the way of life has been opened by him whom God has provided: and we see wherein a genuine compliance with the gospel does consist, and the nature of a true faith in Christ: and we see what is implied in the everlasting life that is promised to believers, and how faith interests us in the promise, and how that the covenant is, in all things, well ordered and sure. And now there is a wide field opened for a large improvement, in many doctrinal and practical inferences and remarks. For,

1. It is very natural to make the same observations here, with regard to a genuine compliance with the *gospel*, as were before made with respect to a real conformity to the *law*: for, from what has been said, we may easily see wherein consists that life of faith in Christ, which true believers live—that all unregenerate men are entirely destitute of this true faith in Christ; yea, diametrically opposite thereunto in the temper of their minds, and therefore cannot be brought to it but by the

almighty power and all-conquering grace of God—that there is nothing in them to move God to do this for them, but every thing to the contrary—that God is at perfect liberty to have mercy on whom he will, according to his sovereign pleasure—that it is reasonable to think that the same sovereign good pleasure, which moves him to be the author, will move him to be the finisher of our faith—that true faith, being thus specifically different from every counterfeit, may therefore be discerned and known, &c. But because I have already been larger than at first I designed, therefore I will omit these, and all other remarks which might be made ; and will conclude,

2. With only this one observation, viz. That if these things be true, which have been said concerning the nature of faith and the way of salvation by free grace through Christ, and concerning that view of things which the true believer has, then nothing is more plain and evident than that the true believer must needs feel himself to be under the strongest obligations possible to an entire devotedness to GOD, and a life of universal *holiness*. Every thing meets, in that view of things which he has, to bind his soul forever to the Lord. One main design of the gospel was to make men holy ; and it is, in its nature, perfectly well adapted to answer the end : For now all the natural obligations we are under to love God and live to him, are seen in a divine light ; such as arise from the infinite excellence of the divine nature....God's entire right to us and authority over us : and their binding nature is exhibited in a more striking and affecting manner in the gospel than in the law ;—the *cross* of Christ gives a more lively representation of the infinite evil of sin than all the thunders of Mount Sinai : and a sight of our natural obligations are attended with a sense of all the additional sacred ties, arising from the infinite goodness of God to a guilty, ruined world, in providing a Savior....from the dying love of Christ....from the free gift of converting grace....from pardoning mercy....from God's covenant love and faithfulness, and from the raised expectations of eternal glory ;—all which must join to beget a right sense of sin, as being a thing, in itself, the

most unfit, unreasonable and wicked, as well as infinitely disingenuous and ungrateful to God, and concur to make it appear as the worst of evils....the most to be hated, dreaded, watched, and prayed against: And a humble heart, full of self-diffidence, and under a sense of the divine all-sufficiency, and in a firm belief of the truth of the gospel, will most naturally, and, as it were, continually apply itself, by faith and prayer, to God through Christ, to be kept from all sin, and to be preserved to the heavenly kingdom: so that those views which the true believer has, have the strongest tendency to universal holiness, and do naturally lay a solid foundation for it. And those views are not only maintained in a greater or less degree, from day to day, by the gracious influence of the holy spirit, which dwells in them; but are increasing and brightening through the course of their lives: so that as the grand design of the gospel is to make men holy, so it is pefectly well adapted, in its nature, to answer the end: And therefore *he that is born of God sinneth not;* and *how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* And such like scriptures must, in the nature of things, be found to be true, in the experience of every real believer. Nor can any but graceless hypocrites be emboldened, by the doctrines of free grace, to sin, as it were, upon free cost; and a double vengeance will they pull down upon their guilty heads.

Particularly, the whole frame and tenor of the gospel naturally tends to excite us to an universal *benevolence* to mankind, in imitation of the infinite goodness of the divine nature—and even to be benevolent and kind to the evil and unthankful, and to those in whom there is no motive to excite our good will, but much to the contrary—and to love our enemies, and bless them that curse us, and do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us. It is impossible, when we see the infinite beauty of the self-moving goodness of the divine nature, as exercised in the whole affair of our redemption and salvation, towards creatures so infinitely vile, unworthy and ill-deserving, but that we should love that glorious goodness, and be changed into the same image, and

have it become natural to us to love enemies, and forgive injuries, and be like God. A *malicious christian*, a *spiteful believer*, is the greatest contradiction and the most unnatural thing.

That which has had no small hand in bringing the doctrines of grace into contempt in the world, as tending to licentiousness, is partly because they have not been rightly understood, and partly through the wicked lives of graceless hypocrites, who have made a high profession. What remains now, therefore, but that the people of God, by holy and exemplary lives, should convince the world that these are *doctrines according to godliness?*

I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present yourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service: for *you are not your own, but bought with a price*—and that *not of silver and gold, but of the precious blood of the Son of God;* and therefore *live no more to yourselves, but to him that died for you:* And *be ye followers of God as dear children. Blessed be God for the unspeakable gift of his Son.* AMEN.

THE END.

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